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WILLIAM D. O'CONNOR

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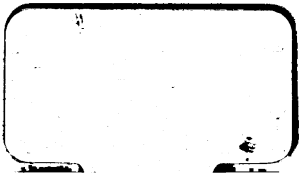

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HEROES OF THE STORM

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HEROES OF THE STORM

BY

WILLIAM D. O'CONNOR

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

SUMNER I. KIMBALL

Superintendent of the United States Life-Saving Service

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY
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1904

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PUBLISHERS' NOTE

MANY friends of W. D. O'Connor have manifested their interest in bringing to the attention of the general public the graphic stories of American heroism which are contained in this volume. Among these friends was Charles W. Eldridge, formerly of the publishing house of Thayer and Eldridge, Boston, and afterward connected with the Treasury Department at Washington. Out of loyalty to O'Connor's memory, Mr. Eldridge undertook the considerable task of examining all of O'Connor's contributions to the Annual Reports of the Life-Saving Service, and of selecting those best adapted for republication. The preparation of the volume for the press was nearly completed at the time of Mr. Eldridge's death in 1903, and the publishers of "Heroes of the Storm" desire to express their obligation to the service which Mr. Eldridge's affectionate admiration for his friend led him to perform.

4 PARK STREET, BOSTON.

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INTRODUCTION

WILLIAM DOUGLAS O'CONNOR, the author of the narratives contained in this volume, was intimately associated with me during many years while he held the office of Assistant General Superintendent of the United States Life-Saving Service, and probably to few persons were his intellectual and social characteristics better known.

To say that his wonderful imagination was his most brilliant quality would be to do him wrong, unless the opinion were duly qualified with the statement that his mind was thoroughly logical and his perceptions were extremely acute. His reason was as powerful as his fancy. He could argue as clearly as he could paint a picture, either with words or colors.

Mr. O'Connor was born in Boston, January 2, 1832, and there mingled in his veins that good blood of Scotch and Irish ancestry which has so often taken high place in the pathways of distinction. His youthful years gave certain promise of extraordinary character and ability. Endowed with an exuberant imagination and an intensely

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poetic temperament, he naturally found delight in the realm of art. In painting, to which his boyhood fancy first inclined, he so acquitted himself as to show that preëminence lay easily within his reach. In poetry also he manifested excellent gifts. At the age of twenty, however, he turned his attention to the wider fields of literature, and took an editorial desk in the office of the "Boston Commonwealth," a prominent daily newspaper established for the advocacy of free-soil principles. From 1854 to 1860 he was a member of the editorial staff of the "Philadelphia Saturday Evening Post." In the latter year he published a powerful romance entitled "Harrington," and during the following years of his life many other productions of his facile and trenchant pen enriched the literature of the times. Of these the most notable in fiction are "The Ghost" and "The Carpenter," and in the field of controversy, "The Good Gray Poet" (a defense of Walt Whitman), and "Hamlet's Note-Book" (a discussion of the Baconian authorship of Shakespeare). The former are characterized by an abounding wealth of sentiment and vivid imagery depicted with captivating grace and fluency, while the latter exhibit a complete mastery of every polemic weapon.

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In 1861 he entered the civil service of the United States as corresponding clerk of the Light-house Board, becoming chief clerk in 1873. From 1874 to 1875 he was librarian of the Treasury Department; from 1875 to 1878 a clerk in the office of the Revenue Marine Division, with which the Life-Saving Service was then connected, and on the 28th of June, 1878, was made Assistant General Superintendent of the Life-Saving Service. He brought to the latter not only a mind richly stored with valuable attainments, but a heart full of the love of humanity, which through subsequent years he thoroughly dedicated to the great work intrusted to this department of the government.

How much the service owes to his untiring and loving fidelity none fully know save those most closely associated with him officially. Besides discharging his administrative duties, he was largely engaged in the preparation of the Annual Reports of the service. For this important task he possessed, in addition to a bounteous gift of clear and powerful expression, the skill and cultivated judgment which come with long and critical experience. The labor of preparing a volume of this character involves an amount of patient application verging upon drudgery, and is liable in unskillful

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hands to impart a shade of dullness to the pages. No such defect ever marred Mr. O'Connor's work. Up to the year 1889 most of the accounts of shipwreck involving loss of life are from his pen. Such accounts being of an official character, and usually limited to a naked recital of facts, would seem to afford little opportunity for that play of the imagination and descriptive power which are so essential to enlist the interest of the general reader; but these are couched in language at once so apt and graphic, with illustrations so vivid and fascinating as almost to make the stories real, present transactions taking place with all their heroism and horror within the reader's actual vision. The most romantic sea tales of fiction are no more absorbing; and yet there is not in them a word of exaggeration, and participants in the scenes described have often and invariably pronounced them absolutely correct. The appearance of the Annual Reports containing these narratives attracted wide attention, and the demand for the volumes became so great that larger editions were necessary to meet it. The interest in the service thus stimulated by Mr. O'Connor's work largely contributed to its early development and aided in its subsequent prosperity and success.

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Mr. O'Connor's death, in May, 1889, was a serious loss to the Life-Saving Service, as well as an inexpressible bereavement to his friends. He was a singularly delightful and lovable companion, most truly constituted of gentleness and grace, always distinguished by a bearing that never lacked dignity, nor yet suggested coldness. To those to whom it was given to be his associates in his later days, he manifested an uncomplaining endurance of physical suffering which only the more clearly exhibited and, perhaps, intensified the amiable qualities which through life so much endeared him to all who knew him well.

S. I. KIMBALL,

General Superintendent
United States Life-Saving Service.

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HEROES OF THE STORM

I

THE SHIP CIRCASSIAN

THE Circassian was a large, full-rigged iron ship, 280 feet long, of 1741 tons burden, about twenty years old, valued at $145,000, and laden with a small general cargo, estimated to be worth $45,000. Her history was somewhat remarkable. She had been formerly a steamer, owned in England, and during the war had been captured as a blockade-runner and sold to parties at the North. A short time afterward she went ashore on Sable Island, and was got off by the Columbian Wrecking Company, under the charge of Captain John Lewis, who finally lost his life upon her. She was subsequently purchased by a New York firm, and placed on the New Orleans route. Upon a voyage to New York, she again went ashore, this time at Squan, N. J., in December, 1869. Being gotten off, she was laid up in dock about three years, and then bought by a Liverpool house, and converted into a sailing-ship. Her final wreck took place upon her first voyage after her alteration. She was bound from Liverpool to New York with a crew of thirty-

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seven persons, including her commander, Captain Richard Williams, together with twelve passengers whom she had taken from a wreck at sea.

On December 11, 1876, at ten minutes to eleven o'clock at night, owing, as her captain stated, to an error of the compass, she ran upon a bar about 400 yards from the shore of Long Island, N. Y., where she stranded; her size and her great draught of water, which was 19¾ feet, causing her to ground at this considerable distance. The night was dark; a northeast gale was blowing, with a thick snowstorm and heavy sea.

The ship was immediately discovered by the patrol of station No. 10 (Captain Baldwin Cook keeper), and the crew of the station promptly assembled. To have launched the boat in the heavy seas, which in that vicinity roll in numerous combing breakers from the outer bar to the beach, would have been foolhardy. It was equally impossible to reach the ship at that time with the shot-line; her distance from shore, the resistance of the gale to the line, and the darkness, which would have prevented the men firing the mortar from seeing by the bowing of the line what allowance to make for the force of the wind in aiming, and also prevented the people on board from discovering the line if it fell over the rigging, being all elements of failure. It was, therefore, necessary to wait till dawn before commencing operations, when the life-saving crew would have the double

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advantage of light and a lower tide. The gear meanwhile was gotten in readiness for action, and the crews of the contiguous stations, Nos. 9 and 11, were summoned from a distance of several miles on either hand.

At daybreak the falling tide enabled the mortar to be planted lower on the beach and nearer the vessel, which also in the meantime had been driven considerably nearer to the shore by the force of the sea, and, at the third fire, the ball fell plumply upon the deck, and connection was made with hawser and hauling-lines for the use of the life-car.

The sea had now, however, subsided to such an extent that it was judged that more expeditious work could be done with the surf-boat, which was accordingly launched, and in seven trips the entire number of persons on board the vessel, forty-nine in all, were safely brought on shore.

During the night there was the usual difficulty in prevailing upon those on board the ship not to attempt to land in the ship's boats — an attempt which would certainly have resulted disastrously. It was prevented, however, and the deliverance of all on board was accomplished without casualty.

The Coast Wrecking Company, of New York, was now engaged to save the vessel and cargo, and at once commenced operations under the general direction of Captain Perrin, an agent of the company, and the local agent, Captain Charles A. Pierson, of Bridgehampton. Captain John

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Lewis, of New York, had immediate charge of the work on board the vessel, assisted by three engineers from New York, and twelve men, ten of whom were members of an Indian tribe, now whalers and wreckers, resident at the neighboring village of Shinnecock. Beside these sixteen persons, there were on board the ship sixteen of her regular company, including the master and officers, making a total of thirty-two in all. Captain Luther D. Burnett, of Southampton, owing to his great experience as a surfman, had been employed by the wrecking company to take charge of the boats employed in lightening the ship by removing her cargo.

The ship lay across the bar with her head to the southeast. This transverse position, as events proved, was dangerous. Being of iron, very heavy, of great length, and lying thus substantially athwart a ridge, principally supported amidships, with her ends comparatively off the bottom in the deeper water, she had a constant tendency to sag and break in two. The object of the wrecking company was, of course, to work her off as speedily as possible into the open sea. In such cases the method usually adopted is to sink heavy anchors to seaward of the ship, the latter being held thereto by immense hawsers; and a perpetual strain being kept by the capstan upon these hawsers, the vessel, aided by the heavy swell and the rising tides, which tend to move and lift her, is

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gradually pulled toward the ocean. This course had been pursued with the Circassian, and within a fortnight she had been moved ninety-eight yards upon the bar. She now lay a total distance from the shore of 308 yards at low tide.

Under the circumstances, it would have been prudent to have kept a line stretched from the ship to the shore, thus retaining communication with the life-saving station for use in case of emergency. This, however, the agents of the wrecking company, upon repeated solicitations, steadily refused to do. It appears that the crew of twelve wreckers, including the ten Shinnecock Indians, had been engaged to remain on board the vessel until she floated off the bar. The coming easterly storm, with its accompanying high tides, was relied upon to aid in effecting the release of the ship, and the principal motive for refusing to allow a line to be run from the ship to the shore was the apprehension that the crew, fearing danger, might avail themselves of this means to leave the vessel during the storm, when their services would be most needed. Absolute dependence was placed upon the great strength of the ship to enable her to withstand the gale, and it was this miscalculation of her resistant power which led to the catastrophe.

As early as the 26th of December an easterly storm was prevailing and the weather was very threatening. By the 29th, the storm had so in-

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creased that the lighters engaged in removing the cargo were unable to work with safety, and at ten o'clock in the morning the last cargo-gang, led by Captain Luther D. Burnett, came ashore. This was the latest communication had with the vessel.

It was expected that the ship would float at high water that night, and be taken to sea under canvas. During the day, however, the gale increased in violence, with snow and sleet, and the sea had become tremendous. By four o'clock in the afternoon the immense bulk of the ship was seen from the shore rolling and pounding heavily on the bar. It was also seen that the hawsers, bent to heavy anchors to seaward, had been slacked. This denoted that the hope of getting her out to sea at that particular time had been abandoned, and also that those on board were becoming apprehensive, and desired that she should be driven in toward the beach, where their peril would have been lessened. The slackening of her cables, however, had no effect, and it was seen later that she had settled in the water. This appearance was probably the result of her having already broken her hull, and explains why she did not move when her hawsers were eased.

Darkness came on without any abatement of the tempest, and the ship continued to labor heavily. It was not, however, till seven o'clock that she made any signal of distress. Notwithstanding the general confidence in her stoutness,

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alarm for her safety began soon to prevail. The crews of the next stations, Nos. 9 and 11, were at once sent for, and Captain Baldwin Cook and his men, of station No. 10, hastened to prepare for the forlorn attempt at rescue.

Ordinarily, the beach presents the aspect of a broad, interminable avenue of sand, with the ocean on one hand, and a low line of hummocks and mounds, crowned with coarse grass, upon the other. Upon that night it presented an almost unprecedented spectacle. The broad space, usually bare, was flooded in the darkness by a furious sea, which momentarily broke all over it, with prodigious uproar and confusion, reaching in places as far as the beach-hills, and pouring through their clefts or sluiceways. So overswept was the beach with this seething water, that the keeper and his men could with difficulty find a place upon which to plant the mortar for an attempt to fire a shot-line to the wreck. The spot finally fixed upon was almost under the beach-hills, seventy-two yards farther back than the position chosen for the mortar upon the occasion of the original stranding of the Circassian. The vessel being at a distance of 308 yards, at low tide, as stated, the mortar was now 380 yards from her. Although the effort was resolutely and persistently made, it is evident that no shot-line could possibly have reached her at such a distance in the teeth of the hurricane which prevailed. If it had, it would have been

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useless at this time, her decks being now completely swept by the surges, her crew already up in the fore-rigging for safety, and no one in a position to haul upon a line from shore. No other means of reaching the wreck was possible. In the tremendous sea then hurling thousands of tons of water each moment upon the beach, no life-boat, even if unbroken by the weight of the surf, could have been propelled from shore.

A red Coston light was burnt by the crew of the station to let the men in the fore-rigging of the wreck know that their peril was understood, and a large fire of driftwood was built upon shore, abreast of the ship, under the sand-hills. The preparations for firing the mortar, which meanwhile actively continued, were much impeded at first by the difficulty of finding a place where the sea did not reach, and then by the wet, flying sand which covered the shot-line in spite of every effort to protect it. To keep the shot-line dry, free, and unsnarled, is necessary for its efficient flight toward a wreck. It was now almost immediately soaked by the rain and spray, clogged by the drifting sand, and frozen. By eight o'clock, however, the gun was in readiness. In the meantime the mainmast had fallen, carrying with it the mizzen topmast. This was a sinister occurrence. It denoted the beginning of the breaking up of the vessel.

The alarm and anxiety of the old captains and

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seamen on shore was now increased by an extraordinary circumstance. The mortar was just shotted and the line ready for the first fire, when the wind, which had been blowing furiously from the east-southeast all day, suddenly chopped around to the west-southwest, and became almost a tornado. So abrupt a change, with such an increase of fury in a gale, is almost unprecedented. It blew with such dreadful violence that it was nearly impossible to look to windward on account of the flying sand. A terrific cross-sea at once ensued. The water swelled up in great heaps, and swept the decks of the wreck from every side. The surf flooded the beach still higher, cutting away the beach-hills, and at intervals tearing new gullies through them. Added to all was a streaming torrent of rain. The bitter cold, the darkness, the frightful roar and commotion, the incessant hail of wet sand, the wind blowing so that men were thrown down by it, the general elemental pell-mell, made the scene indescribable.

The effect of this sudden change in the direction of the gale was to force the gun from the position which had been obtained for it with so much difficulty. In firing toward a wreck, allowance must be made for the yawing of the shot-line by the wind, and the position, somewhat to the eastward of the ship, which had been chosen on this consideration, had now to be taken up to the westward. Considerable time was consumed in the

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effort to find a suitable place for the mortar, and there was also trouble to get the match-rope to burn. At length, however, the obstacles were surmounted and several shots were fired in succession toward the vessel. It was necessary that the humane effort should be made, but, as already remarked, it was impossible that any shot carrying a line could have reached her at such a distance and in such a gale, and equally impossible, even if it had reached her, that it could have been taken advantage of by the wretched men clinging to the fore-rigging, with the furious mob of waters rioting over the hull below them. In fact, one of the survivors expressly declared, "It would have been impossible for us to have used the line, even if it had reached us."

Beyond the futile endeavor to reach the wreck by a shot-line, nothing further was or could be attempted. The only hope was that the wreck might hold together till daylight, when it was barely possible that something might be done to effect a rescue. The night was passed by those on shore in watching the vessel. What appeared to them, as some have said, the longest night ever known, must have seemed a miserable eternity to the hapless men upon the wreck. The storm never abated its violence. At midnight the tide fell. Lights were seen upon the deck, and the hull was apparently whole, but cleared of everything by the sea. At two o'clock (Saturday, Decem-

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ber 30) it was descried by the glass that the men had left the foremast, and had taken to the mizzen-rigging. At half-past three the vast black hull was seen to have broken in two, her forepart settling down outside, and her stern inside, the bar. The glass showed that the mizzenmast was still erect, and the rigging was full of men. At times, through the roar of the tempest, their cries were heard by those on shore. At four o'clock the mizzenmast, which was of iron, began to careen to port with its living load. For half an hour the powerless watchers on the beach saw it gradually dipping toward the sea. At half-past four it reached the monstrous water, into which it settled slowly, with the men that clung to the shrouds.

It is to the credit of the life-saving crews that the dreadful catastrophe did not paralyze what further exertion was possible. Nothing was more unlikely than that any person could reach the shore from the wreck in that raging sea; but, in view of such a possibility, Captain H. E. Huntting, the superintendent of the district, had organized a lantern squad of eighteen or twenty men to search the surf about forty yards apart, and immediately upon the disappearance of the mast they scattered up the beach, with their lanterns, to the eastward. The set, or current, was running with great velocity outside the breakers to the east, which lessened the chances of any person reaching the shore. Suddenly, however, those in the

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rear heard a shout on ahead. A group of the life-saving men was approaching through the darkness with their lanterns, supporting four drooping figures, which they had hauled from the surf. These were the only survivors. The remaining twenty-eight had perished.

The persons rescued were the first and second officers of the ship, the carpenter, and a seaman in the employ of the wrecking company. It appears that the two first named had obtained possession of a cylindrical piece of cork, five feet long and eleven inches in diameter, fitted it with straps and beckets, and arranged between themselves to cling to it for their last chance of life. When the mast dipped into the sea, they had sprung together as far forward as possible. They were at once immersed in the raging flood, and presently came to the surface clinging to the buoy. In a moment the seaman employed by the wrecking company clutched hold of the buoy, and then the carpenter, coming up near them, was seized and helped to a place beside them. Their salvation now was mainly owing to the perfect coolness, judgment, and resolution of the first officer of the ship, under whose management the escape was accomplished. This brave and steady man under such circumstances actually schooled his comrades in the course they were to pursue, and took command of their strange craft as composedly as though he were assuming charge of the stanchest sea-boat.

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Under his direction the four men, side by side, locked legs with each other. This quadruple intertwining of their lower limbs bound them together, and served to steady the buoy to whose ropes they clung. They were now one mass in quaternion, tossed to and fro in the immense wash of the sea. Every other instant, in the thick darkness, they were flooded by the surge. At these times, under their gallant captain's word of command, they held their breaths and gripped the buoy-ropes hard, till their momentary release from the wave. In the refluence of the surge, his order bade them relax their hold a little for rest and breath. There was but a bare chance for life, but these manœuvres economized their strength and breath, till, swept eastward by the current and forward by the surf, the moment came which flung them into the shoaling breakers. Then under his last shout of command, in the furious welter of the surf and undertow, they gave all their reserved force to the desperate plunge ahead for the beach, and in the midst of their convulsive struggle, half on their feet and half dragged down by the wave, the men of the life-saving service rushed in upon them, and tore them from the sea. They were almost drowned, but they were saved.

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II

THE STEAMER AMÉRIQUE

THE Amérique was a French steamer of 3033 tons burden, belonging to the line of the General Transatlantic Company between Havre and New York, and commanded by Captain Alfred Ponzolz. She was a comparatively new vessel, having been built in 1865 and rebuilt in 1872. Her estimated value was $200,000, and she was laden with a general cargo, valued at $400,000. She had a pilot, but owing to some error in sounding, she stranded within 150 yards of the shore at three o'clock on Sunday morning, January 11, 1877, near Seabright, N. J., one mile and a half from life-saving station No. 3, and three fourths of a mile from life-saving station No. 4. It was very dark at the time. There was a southeast wind, rain, a heavy sea, a wall of ice upon the beach along the line of the breakers, and a boiling surf full of enormous ice-cakes.

The stranding of the vessel was almost immediately discovered by patrolman Edwards, of station No. 3, and patrolman Ferguson, of station No. 4, who at once signaled to her by burning their red Coston lights and waving their lanterns,

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and hurried back to their respective stations to assist in the preparations for the rescue. These signals were seen on board the Amérique, but not responded to.

The crews of the stations answered promptly to the call. Keeper Charles H. Valentine, of No. 4, was at home, ill, and the station was in charge of surfman Potter, who, by fifteen minutes past three, had the men actively engaged in preparations for hauling the boat to the beach. Keeper Abner H. West, of No. 3, being farther away, received the alarm later, and at once hastened to the scene with all of his men, excepting one then out on patrol. As the wreck was nearer station No. 4, the crew of station No. 3 brought no apparatus except the large beach reflector-lantern. Upon arriving, however, keeper West, not finding the keeper of station No. 4 present, took command and sent men to No. 4 to bring the mortar apparatus, dispatching his own crew for their boat, which was better adapted to the work in hand than the boat belonging to station No. 4.

Pending the arrival of the boat and apparatus, keeper West observed a light near the water alongside of the ship. This signified that the attempt was about to be made to send a boat on shore, and the keeper and the three men left with him instantly endeavored to prevent it by shouting through the speaking trumpet, uttering loud cries, and making signals with their lanterns.

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Their warning voices, half drowned by the noise of the steam from the vessel and the deafening roar of the surf crunching the broken ice upon the beach, were of no avail, for presently the light was observed to pass alongside of the vessel, and then, in the darkness, a large white boat was seen spectrally gliding from the shadow of the steamer's bows upon the crest of a huge wave. What followed illustrates the extreme folly of attempts to make the shore in a boat, unless conducted by experienced surfmen. The appearance presented by breakers, when viewed from a point at sea, is so different from that afforded upon the land, and so deceptive, as to invite what seems a safe and easy enterprise, but one which is almost certain to result in disaster, not only from the treacherous illusion referred to, but from the ignorance, common among even the ablest seamen, of the difficult art, possessed only by professional experts, of handling a boat in the tumbling rollers of the surf. The boat which had put out from the Amérique contained twelve French sailors. It was very dark, and she was chiefly visible by a light which she carried. She had got about halfway to the shore when she was suddenly rolled over by an immense breaker, and came tumbling in empty toward the beach. For a moment it was thought that the whole boat's crew had perished, but the next they were vaguely seen struggling in the water. The gallant keeper instantly shouted

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to his three men to follow him, and the four dashed over the barrier of ice three feet high which lined the beach, and plunged waist-deep into the boiling undertow. A perilous and dreadful struggle for the lives of the drowning sailors now ensued in the edge of the heavy surf, which was thick with huge cakes of floating ice. The boat's crew were without life-preservers, although there was a good supply on board the steamer. They were encumbered with heavy clothing, and half suffocated and frozen by the icy water, and quite helpless, yet, animated with the dangerous activity of the drowning, they were flung in toward the shore by the breakers. The task laid upon the keeper and his men was to maintain their difficult foothold waist-deep in the strong current of the undertow, contending with the masses of floating ice which dashed against them, and at the same time to drag from the water these sailors, frantically clutching at their rescuers, while heavy and inert as logs for any reciprocal effort in their own behalf.

At the first desperate onset, sorely beset by these difficulties, the four stalwart life-savers tore four men from the breakers; then plunging in again, they brought out four more. To complicate and add to these labors, after hauling the men from the undertow, they had to lift them by sheer force, they being perfectly helpless, over the icy barrier, three feet high, between the sea

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and shore. It was while helping to get those last rescued over, that the keeper caught a glimpse through the darkness of something showing up black in the whiteness of the foam; it was another man; and leaving his mates to get the rescued men over the ice-pile, the keeper rushed into the surf and seized him. At the same moment he saw two others blacken up in the water close by him, but was powerless to assist them, and they were among the three lost. In the violent endeavor now made to haul the dying sailor from the undertow, the brave keeper came near losing his own life. The man caught hold of him with the terrific grip of the drowning, and at the same moment he lost his foothold and was thrown down by the fierce current. Embarrassed by the heavy body clinging to him, he was unable to get up again, and was in imminent peril of his life. Fortunately the next sea washed them up against a large pile of ice, which the keeper seized, and, with a desperate effort, regained his feet, and made for the shore, dragging the man along with him. At the same moment one of his crew came to his assistance, and they reached the beach in safety.

The man last saved proved to be the officer in charge of the steamer's boat. He and the eight others rescued were carried to a cottage on the beach, and promptly cared for. Of the twelve persons in the boat, three were swept away and

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drowned. Of the nine rescued, it is probable that none would have gained the shore, cumbered as they were by their heavy garments, and whelmed in the enormous surf and floating ice-cakes, but for the resolute gallantry of the keeper and his men.

The bodies of the three sailors drowned were carried farther up the beach by the current, and were discovered on the evening or night of that day by the patrols of station No. 1 (Sandy Hook, N. J.). They were found at different periods of the night in the undertow, by means of lanterns, and brought ashore by the patrolmen. This fact, as well as the early discovery of the Amérique, well illustrates the splendid vigilance of the patrols.

At four o'clock, an hour previous to this incident, the crew of station No. 4 had arrived with their surf-boat, which they had laboriously hauled by hand along the slush and mud of the turnpike, and had endeavored to launch, an effort baffled by the high surf and the ice-cakes, as already stated. Keeper West had dispatched them back for the mortar apparatus, sending at the same time for the boat belonging to his station. By five o'clock the mortar apparatus and life-car had arrived, two trips of the station hand-cart having been required to bring it complete upon the ground. Two hours had been spent in this toilsome pulling and hauling in the mire and darkness, and everything was

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now ready for direct operations. The interim had been signalized by the rescue of the men from the surf.

The first shot fired from the mortar failed by the breaking of the spiral wire from the cord. The shot-line was then attached directly to the ball, and the second shot was fired and successfully carried the line over the vessel between the main and mizzenmasts. The hawser and hauling-lines were then attached to the shot-line and hauled on board, together with a bottle containing directions for making the hawser fast on board the steamer. As none of the officers of the steamer appeared to understand English well, these directions seem to have been imperfectly understood, and considerable delay attended the effort to get the hawser and hauling-lines properly placed on board the vessel. Finally, daylight having appeared, the boat belonging to station No. 3, which had meanwhile been brought to the ground by a team, was launched, with the view of boarding the vessel and properly fixing the hawser. The dangerous breakers and currents near the steamer frustrated the attempt, but the boat managed to get sufficiently near to enable instructions to be shouted to those on board, and at length the ropes were got into proper position for working the life-car.

Several hundred spectators had meanwhile assembled on the beach, and the operations of the life-saving crews were conducted amidst much

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excitement and applause. By the first trip with the life-car two passengers, Mr. Cornell Jewett and his wife, were landed. The regulations of the life-saving service provide that the lives of persons on board a wreck are of paramount concern, the saving of property being a secondary and subordinate consideration, and as considerable baggage had been sent in the car with this couple, surfman Cook, of station No. 4, went off in the return car to conduct operations. Under his direction the hauling-line of the life-car on board was attached to and worked by the hoisting-engine of the steamer, while the shore-line was hauled by hand. The labor was actively begun, and by noon numerous trips had been made from the vessel, the life-car carrying on each trip several persons, till fifty-four passengers, among whom were women and children, and forty-six of the steamer's crew were safely landed. The baggage of the passengers, the mails, and two boxes of gold bullion, weighing 275 pounds each, were then brought ashore in the same manner.

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III

A TRIPLE WRECK

THE SCHOONERS POW-WOW, ADDIE P. AVERY, AND MILES STANDISH

A TRIPLE wreck, occurring upon Cape Cod, in the neighborhood of station No. 8, Second District, January 3, 1878, was the occasion of the unavoidable loss of twelve lives. Between four and five o'clock in the morning a patrolman roused the station with the news that a three-masted schooner, which proved to be the Addie P. Avery of Port Jefferson, L. I., James A. Thompson master, was ashore upon the outer bar, half a mile north of the station. The station crew, instantly alert, was engaged in preparations for a rescue, when another patrolman hurried in with the information that a small fishing schooner, afterward known to be the Pow-wow of Provincetown, Mass., Matthew Eaton master, was ashore about a third of a mile to the southward of the station.

The keeper, Captain Nelson Weston, was for a moment greatly embarrassed in regard to the course to be pursued, two vessels, with crews in peril, being simultaneously on shore in opposite

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directions, help being possible to only one of them at a time, as, to divide the life-saving force, consisting of only seven men, would fatally weaken its efficiency, and there being no possibility of signaling for aid from the adjacent stations on account of the blinding snowstorm. The keeper solved the dilemma by resolving to first aid the Pow-wow, on the consideration of her probably having, as the event proved, the greater number of men on board, and being less likely, as the smaller vessel, to hold together in the breakers.

The condition of the surf determined the use of the mortar apparatus in preference to the boat, and as much of it as could be transported at one time through the soft sand and slush was loaded upon the hand-cart and toilsomely dragged abreast of the Pow-wow. A portion of the crew then hastened back to the station for the remainder of the apparatus, while the rest were busied in preparations for the rescue. It was then daybreak, and suddenly, through a rift in the whirling snow, another schooner was descried ashore about a mile to the southward. To this vessel, which was ascertained to be the Miles Standish, of Provincetown, the keeper hastened, leaving his crew in charge of a surfman, and as he came up to her saw her people, who were twelve in number, jumping ashore from her bows as the receding seas permitted, her commander, Captain John B. Bangs, having, when she first struck the outer

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bar, crowded on all sail, forced her over, and driven her well up on the beach.

The arrival of the keeper was a fortunate circumstance for her crew, as, in the water-soaked condition of their clothing, and exposed to the icy blast, they would soon have become helpless, and, perhaps, have perished, the snowstorm completely preventing them from seeing what direction to take for refuge. Guided by him upon a route behind the beach-hills, where they were less exposed to the bitter gale, they reached the station, and were furnished with dry clothing and restoratives.

The keeper then hastened to the Pow-wow, where he found his comrades ready for operations with the apparatus as soon as the vessel, which had parted her sheet-cable and was dragging along the outer bar by her small anchor, should fetch up. At the first shot, the line fell across her main-topmast stay. The crew, who were hanging on in the fore-rigging and on the bowsprit, being benumbed with cold, and, besides, needing their strength to keep their hold, as the vessel was rolling heavily, made no effort to go aloft to reach it. After an ineffectual attempt to get it within their reach by working it from the shore, the keeper determined to fire again, depressing the gun so as to carry the line, if possible, among the men, which he successfully did, the line falling upon the bowsprit, where it was

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grasped by the people clinging there. Drawing upon it, they soon had on board the inch and a half whip-line attached thereto, but the wreck was now again drifting southward, and it was impossible to set up the hawser for the employment of the breeches-buoy or life-car, and the wreck, moreover, was beginning to break up.

In this strait, signs were made to the sailors to severally attach themselves to the line and jump overboard. By this means ten out of the fifteen persons constituting the vessel's company were one by one drawn ashore. This desperate measure, which necessity compelled, was rendered even more dangerous by the terrible character of the surf and by the presence in the tumultuous water of fragments of timbers, spars, and planking from the vessel, capable of inflicting the worst bruises and fatal wounds, and, worse still, of masses of tangled and writhing cordage, forming the most perilous of snares for one struggling through the breakers.

In effecting the landing of these unfortunate men through such perils and difficulties, the fiery heroism of surfmen, so often seen upon our coast, was again manifest. As the sailors were drawn severally toward the shore, station men, with cords around their waists, the ends of which were held by their fellows, would go deep into the fearful undertow to aid them. At one time the men on the bowsprit had not hauled back sufficient line

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to enable the next passenger to be pulled ashore, and seeing that they were about to lose their only chance for life, they secured the line on board, thus leaving the man held fast in the breakers. To save him two surfmen, at the greatest risk to themselves, rushed into the surf, and with herculean effort succeeded in taking him out of the line in which he had fastened himself, and brought him ashore. In the instance of the tenth life saved, the sailor attached to the line had got caught in the wreckage of the jib, and two of the surfmen who had gone into the breakers to clear him became entangled with him in the snarl of floating cordage, and were in extreme danger. To rescue them another surfman, with incredible hardihood, rushed into the boiling surf with his knife and cut them free by severing the line beyond them. This daring feat, necessary for the safety of the three men, involved the sacrifice of the connection thus far maintained with the vessel. One man yet remained on board, apparently senseless, clinging to the rigging. The vessel had now drifted near the shore, and a line was thrown to him by the heaving-stick. He made no effort to grasp it, and presently fell off, lifeless, into the sea. A surfman gallantly plunged after him into the undertow, but without avail. Another man had previously dropped from the bowsprit exhausted, and had perished, and a boy had frozen to death. These three lives were all that were lost

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after the arrival of the life-saving crew upon the scene. It appears that when the vessel first struck, the captain and one man sprang overboard and were drowned. Five persons, therefore, in all, perished. The remaining ten were saved through the strenuous efforts of the life-saving crew, as narrated, and were assisted to the station as they landed by the people from the Miles Standish. They were all frost-bitten, and in some cases so much exhausted that restoratives had to be forced down their throats. Their frost-bitten limbs were treated with cold water and snow, and afterward with poultices of raw potato, and everything possible was done at the station to restore them.

During the operations for the rescue of the crew of the Pow-wow, the quantities of wreckage that came down from the Addie P. Avery, including a portion of her bow, indicated that she broke up soon after striking. There were six persons on board, all of whom were lost.

The twenty-two persons saved from the Pow-wow and Miles Standish were sheltered for a day at the station, and were all provided with clothing by the station crew, who for this purpose relinquished all their spare garments, a frequent loss to which our brave and humane life-saving crews are subjected. Free passes to their homes by railroad were also procured for these survivors.

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IV

THE SHIP A. S. DAVIS

THE wreck of the stanch ship A. S. Davis took place in the memorable gale of October 22 and 23, 1878, a mile and a half north of life-saving station No. 2, Sixth District, North Carolina. The storm in which it occurred will long be remembered in the middle region of the Atlantic seaboard, along which its track was marked by peculiar havoc. Thirty churches and hundreds of dwellings were unroofed or seriously injured in Philadelphia. In Norfolk the ruin was serious. New York, Newport, Albany, Trenton, and Baltimore suffered considerably, and all through New Jersey, eastern Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia manufactories and workshops were destroyed, innumerable dwellings racked and overthrown, trees uprooted, and barns and outbuildings scattered. In some localities farms and meadows were flooded and whole herds of animals drowned by the rising of the waters. The ravage in Chesapeake Bay was indescribable. Numbers of the truck and oyster boats were sunk or stranded. One of the large bay steamers suffered the loss of twenty lives, swept away by the

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sea. In one instance the gale drove a schooner from her anchorage sheer into the woods. Most of the coast islands were flooded or submerged, to the great danger of their inhabitants and the destruction of property. The fury of the tempest upon the open beaches may be readily conceived. Many of the life-saving stations were damaged, and some nearly destroyed. At one place the house was suddenly invaded by the sea at two o'clock in the morning, and, as the doors of the boat-room burst in under the rush of the flood, the crew escaped in the floated surf-boat by rowing out through the portal, their heads nearly grazing the lintel, while the building was ripped from its sills and whirled inland. Another neighborhood was submerged and the station torn from its position. At still another, the sea burst through the station windows, filling the house, from which the crew rowed out, as in the instance previously cited, in the surf-boat. In many localities the beaches were cloven through with new inlets, breaking up the beat of the patrols. The oldest surfmen testify that in all their experience they never knew such a wind and sea. Five of the crew of station No. 2, on the North Carolina beaches, aver that, although they have lived all their lives on this coast and have followed surf-fishing a great many years, they never saw such a gale and sea combined as raged on that night and morning. Another deposes: "The surf was the

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biggest I ever saw, and ran full with the hills. I have been on this coast all my life and had to do with the surf since I was old enough, and I know I never saw such a night or such a surf before."

The storm of which these witnesses speak began (October 22) with a fresh wind and rain from the east. By sunset the wind had increased to a strong gale, and the surf was raging. Even then the launch of a boat would have been impossible. At eight o'clock, according to the register of the Signal Service, the wind was blowing 25 miles an hour; by eleven it had increased to 44; at one o'clock it was driving at the rate of 50 miles; within the next hour, and up to two o'clock, it reached the fearful height of 84. The surf was furiously spreading and leaping beyond its usual limits, reaching the beach-hills, which, in places, it rent and tore away. Nothing living was abroad, except, here and there, miles apart, the solitary patrolmen staggering on through the utter darkness in the forlorn effort to maintain their watch, drenched by the cataract of rain, half suffocated by the blasts, and repeatedly and with violence blown down. To breathe in this atmosphere was well-nigh impossible. No eye could look to windward, for the flying sand. It was in the height of all this fury that the A. S. Davis drove ashore.

The ship had sailed from Callao, Peru, on the 23d of July, for Hampton Roads, Va., with a cargo of guano. She was quite a large vessel, her

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burden being 1399 tons; was nearly new, her age being three years, and was very strongly built. Of the twenty men on board, comprising her captain and crew, her wreck left only one survivor, William H. Minton. It is from him that the particulars of her loss are derived. After the tempest began she sailed under only her upper canvas until the wind blew a whole gale. By midnight her lower main-topsail, which was new, was blown out of the bolt-ropes, and the mizzen lower topsail was taken in. Finally, with only her fore-topsail and fore-topmast stay-sail set, she was racing through the darkness with headlong velocity, amidst the roar of the hurricane, when suddenly, with a shivering shock, she plunged aground. In a moment all was over with her. "There was time for nothing after the ship struck," says the witness, "except for all hands to get into the rigging." The unhappy men sprang for the main and mizzen-shrouds. At once, behind the vessel, held by her bows as in a vice, the sea arose like a mountain and fell down with a stunning crash upon the stern, which it stove in at one blow, filling the vessel and sweeping over her from end to end. A few moments of horrible confusion and uproar, and the ship was torn to pieces. Those who saw the fragments marveled at a destruction which had been as utter as it had been speedy. "I visited the scene of the wreck about sunrise on the morning of the 23d," says

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the wreck commissioner of that region, "and could not conceive it possible that a ship could be so completely broken up." The surviving witness sets the hour of the striking of the vessel at two o'clock. Little more than an hour later the beach patrolmen found her scattered in pieces for a mile along the shore. In the utter gloom which enveloped the whole scene of convulsion, no eye could have descried from the beach the brief and dread dismemberment, nor, had an army of men been gathered there, could any help have been afforded to either vessel or crew. From one of those on board, the survivor, the sea tore all his clothing, save the fragment of a shirt, and threw him, bruised and bleeding, upon the shore. Of the other nineteen men there were only found, within forty hours later, the dead bodies of seventeen, grotesquely clad in tatters of their former garb, and horribly mangled by the wreckage. They had voyaged for three months, and over ten thousand miles, to perish within three hours' sail of their haven.

In this long night of horror and catastrophe, the sturdy constancy with which the patrolmen of the life-saving service kept, or strove to keep, their watch along the whole extent of the tempest-shaken beaches, is worthy of every admiration. This was the night following which a station crew on the Virginia coast, putting out in the boat along the flooded beach in search of a comrade

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who had not returned from his beat, found him at length upon a point which had escaped submersion, the summit of a beach hillock, where he lay prone, nearly dead, clinging to the tufted ground, with the water, which had hunted him from place to place for hours, all around him. On another beach the blast whipped the lantern out of a patrolman's hand, and blew the man over a sandbank several feet high. One of the surfmen states that "it was all a man could do to keep his feet, so powerful was the wind." Another, that he "walked his beat with great difficulty; the night was intensely dark and he could see nothing; the wind frequently almost took him off his feet." It was under such conditions that the heroic watch was maintained. At station No. 2, Sixth District, the domain of the wreck under notice, the first patrol, consisting of two men, one bound north and one south, started out at sunset and got back at midnight, reporting in the words of Keeper Barco, that "it was a dreadful night for any man to be on the beach." The tempest was then mounting to its final frenzy. Nevertheless, the second patrol, consisting of James Balass and John T. Atwood, set out from the station. The beat of each was halfway to the next house, a distance of five miles. James Balass took the road to the south, and did not succeed in returning to the station until morning. He was pitched over three times by the wind, and finally, as the hurri-

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cane increased, was compelled to lie down behind the low breastwork of the beach-hills, and await the abatement of the gale. The other patrolman, John T. Atwood, took the northern beat, and struggled valiantly forward, literally fighting his way over the rough beach. It is probable that it was something after one o'clock when he passed the point abreast of which, about forty minutes later, the ship was destined to perish. She was at that moment flying toward him from the sea to her doom. Had she been then stranded, with the surf rending her asunder, no sight nor sound of her presence could have reached him in the darkness and the uproar of the wind and sea. He struggled on, succeeding in making about four miles of his beat, when the hurricane became irresistible and he could no longer stand. After some time, in a partial lull, he set out on his return. The wind soon veered from east to south-southeast, so that he had to face it directly, and it blew with great violence, but the rain began to moderate, and, as he testifies, "it seemed to light up somewhat, so that I could see a little." Perhaps no words could better express than these the dreadful obscurity through which the patrolman had hitherto groped his way. He had traveled somewhat over a mile, when this livid light enabled him to perceive pieces of wreck of all sizes, washed up along his path by the surf. They increased in quantity, until the beach became

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fairly covered with broken planks and timbers, in every variety of mutilation and fracture. These were to him the first tokens that a ship had been wrecked near by.

As soon as the patrolman saw the first pieces of wreckage, he began to search carefully as he walked for whoever might have come ashore with it, but found no one. Pursuing his way beyond the point where the strew of *débris* ended, which was abreast of where the vessel had run aground, he suddenly observed by the breaking daylight a track of naked footprints in the sand, which he followed for about a hundred yards, into the beach-hills, alternately losing and finding them, until at length they disappeared. As he went back to the beach he saw there a naked man. It was the sailor Minton. He had clung to a piece of the ship's rail when she broke up, and had been flung with it, cut and badly bruised, upon the shore. Not having been, fortunately, deprived of his senses, and being without clothing and very cold, he had crawled up to the sand-hills into which he burrowed up to his neck to keep warm, and where he lay till daybreak. He had just got out of his hole, and limped down to the beach, when the patrolman saw him. As the latter approached, a young man named Quidley, who had come down from the neighborhood, as he expressed it, "to look around," drew near from another direction. Patrolman Atwood stripped off his oilskin trousers and helped to put them on

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the unfortunate sailor; then, leaving him to be conducted to the station by the youth, hurried on ahead to give the alarm.

He arrived at the station by five o'clock, and reported the facts. Keeper Barco, who had been awake all night, instantly set out with his crew, and for three and a half miles searched the beach. The search was not discontinued until October 25, resulting only in the recovery of the bodies, as before described. It was plain that the only person spared from the dreadful catastrophe was the seaman Minton. He remained at the station for eight days, during which time his wounds and bruises were dressed, and he was kept and succored.

Such was the wreck of the A. S. Davis, as gathered from the official investigation customary in such cases. It is evident that the sorrowful loss of life involved could have been prevented by no human power.

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V

THE SCHOONER DAVID H. TOLCK

THE David H. Tolck was a three-masted schooner of 445 tons, bound from Sagua la Grande, Cuba, for New York, with a cargo of sugar. She stranded on the bar off Long Beach, N. J., at three o'clock in the morning of February 26, 1879, having on board eleven persons. These were a crew of eight men; the captain, Irving E. Sawyer; his wife, Mrs. Ida Sawyer; and their little girl, Genevra, eighteen months old.

At first sight, as the vessel struck within 200 yards of the beach, and only half a mile from the nearest life-saving station, it would seem to have been, despite the heavy surf then prevailing, a comparatively easy task to have saved every one on board by the life-lines, all the more that the weather was not particularly stormy. There were, moreover, three life-saving crews upon the beach during the progress of operations, comprising in their number surfmen of unquestionable experience and ability, and among the fifty spectators present there were experts whose names upon the coast are certificates of professional skill in dealing with the sea, and whose advice and suggestions

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were available. There appears to have been no disposition to spare effort, nor were constancy and heroism wanting; yet the bitter endeavor at rescue lasted a whole day and was half baffled, when upon similar occasions, and under apparently worse conditions, deliverance has been the work of an hour; and five persons perished whom at dawn there was every apparent reason to think would soon be safely drawn to land.

At the time it was freely charged that the stranding of the vessel was due to the captain's mistaking a patrolman's lantern for Barnegat Light and steering his course accordingly. This, however, was not the case, as the evidence taken in the course of the official investigation which followed the wreck clearly established. The light referred to was seen by the captain when he must have been about four miles from shore, and that he could have confounded the lofty brilliance of Barnegat, which is a flash-light bursting out every ten seconds from the summit of a tower 165 feet high, with the twinkle of a lantern creeping along the low beach in the hand of a watchman, is a patent absurdity. The evidence indicates that the captain, when about four miles from land, supposing himself to be about seventeen, mistook the Tucker's Beach flash-light for that of Barnegat, and, therefore, changed his course too soon. Even then, however, his error would not have proved fatal had soundings been regularly taken as they should

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have been when approaching so near the land; but the evidence of the surviving officers shows that the lead had not been hove since the previous forenoon. Consequently, the rapid shoaling of the water was not detected, and the first intimation of peril was received when the vessel, running before the wind under all sail, at the rate of eight knots an hour, struck with a crash, hard and fast aground, and the rough seas at once began to break over her from end to end.

The misfortunes which give an air of fatality to this shipwreck seem to have begun with the very beginning of the movement for rescue. The patrolman of life-saving station No. 19 was on the beach nearly abreast of the vessel as she came on an oblique course toward the land, and although it was very dark he saw her running lights, and, understanding her peril, swung his lantern, the instinctive danger signal practiced by beachmen. The startled haste with which he did this put out the light. In an instant he snatched a Coston signal from his haversack, thrust it into the holder, and struck the plunger, which by percussion ignites the cartridge. But in the hurry induced by his sense of the immediate necessity of warning the vessel to tack and stand away from the shore, he had failed to securely fasten the cartridge in the clamp of the holder, and as it blazed up it flew from the socket under the stroke of the plunger, and fell upon the beach, where it was at once

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quenched by an incoming wave. The accident was of little consequence, for the momentary signal was seen on board the vessel; too late, however, for at the same instant she struck. The patrolman at once ran for the station and roused the crew.

In the mean time an attempt was made on board the vessel to back her off with the foresail, but before long the sailors felt the bottom crushing in beneath their feet and gave up the endeavor. The pumps showed nineteen inches of water in the hold. All sail was taken in, and the crew waited patiently until daylight. For a while the captain, who had been ill for several days, remained in the cabin with his wife and child; but, as it soon filled with water, they removed to the cabin top, about three feet above the deck, where they stood with the first and second mates, while the sailors were grouped on the top of the forward house. The decks below them were flooded every instant by the seas which broke over the stern, washing about all movable articles. The ship's boat, which had lain on deck across the main hatch, was smashed to pieces. Every one on board was drenched by the flying water, except the baby, whom the first mate held carefully wrapped up in his arms.

Meanwhile the crew of Station No. 19, roused by the patrolman, had hurried from the station, under the command of keeper B. F. Martin, dragging the boat on its carriage. The vessel could

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be just seen, like a sort of shadow, through the smoky darkness, not plainly enough to distinguish her rig, nor her condition in the water. The first intention was to go out to her in the boat, but, although the tide was low, the surf on the beach was so bad that the keeper determined to attempt the rescue by the breeches-buoy, which, with the wreck-gun and lines, was accordingly brought from the station. Operations by these means were necessarily delayed until daylight should disclose the situation and condition of the vessel, the life-saving crew busying themselves meanwhile in planting the sand-anchor and getting the gear in readiness for action.

The light of dawn showed the position of the schooner; the gun was at once placed, and the first shot fired. The shot fell short, but a second was successful, and carried the line attached over the wreck between the main and mizzenmasts, where it was caught by the sailors. By this time the rapidly swelling tide increased the seas, the violence of which began to break up the vessel about the decks, and forced the ship's company to take to the rigging, with the shot-line in their hands. It was another misfortune that they chose for their position the main and mizzen rigging, because it placed them farther from the shore and less accessible to the life-saving crew, besides putting them in the very quarter where the seas, tumbling in enormous volumes over the stern, made

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it most difficult, if not impossible, to reach them by the boat, should boat service in any subsidence of the swollen water become feasible. The choice was, however, dictated by consideration for the captain's wife and child, who, having been with him on the top of the cabin, could most easily gain the mizzen ratlines. The foremast was also working badly in its step, and seemed to be in danger of falling. Another unfortunate impediment was the fact that the position of the sailors up in the rigging, balanced on their frail foothold of rope, made it impracticable for more than two to haul upon the shot-line at a time, and greatly diminished the force of the hauling. To add to their difficulties, the seas came with such tremendous fury and washed so high as to frequently carry the men on the ratlines off their feet and straighten them out almost horizontally, while they clung by their hands. The sufficiently terrible labors imposed by these conditions were further increased by the shot-line having to be hauled, together with the 1½-inch whip-line with its block which the life-saving crew had now bent on to it, through a lateral current between the wreck and the shore, rushing with a velocity equal to the speed of a running man, which carried the lines, as they were paid out from the shore, far to the northward of the vessel, and by thus obliging a greater quantity to be let go from the land, augmented the weight to a degree that made it almost

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impossible for the unfortunate men on board to haul. Between eight and nine o'clock the keeper and crew of life-saving station No. 18 arrived upon the scene, and assisted the crew of station No. 19 in their efforts to aid the sailors in getting the whip-line to the vessel, which was done by walking to windward with the gathered-up slack of the line, and suddenly letting it go — a manœuvre which enabled those on board to haul in a few fathoms before the current carried the line again past the vessel. Shortly after the arrival of this crew, and in the midst of these efforts, the shot-line, which was of the best quality, perfectly new, with a tensile strength of 624 pounds, suddenly parted, sundered doubtless by some of the wreckage perpetually thrown off by the ship and swept along in the current. Thus, in a moment, the labor of several hours was lost, and the whole had to be begun anew.

The scene at this time was dreadful. About 200 yards from the beach, disclosed by the clear light of day, in the great expanse of stormy water the vessel lay careened, stern to the sea; her lower part, except the starboard waist, bowsprit, and jib-boom completely smothered up in raging surf; empty hogsheads continually coming out of her; her masts and yards aslant, standing away from the riot of breakers below; and ten dark figures scattered about up in the main and mizzen ratlines, some moving, others in quietude, lashed

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to the rigging. One of these figures held something like a bundle. It was the mate, with the baby in his arms. Near by, bound upright on the cross-work of the ratlines, was the mother. Forty or fifty spectators watched this spectacle from the shore.

As soon as the shot-line parted, the life-saving crews hauled back the whip-line attached thereto. It came ashore so terribly kinked and snarled that it took a long time to straighten it. As it was clear that the men on the wreck were unable to haul out the whip-line double, it was determined to unreeve it from the tail-block and send it out single and without incumbrance. At the time severe censure was cast upon the life-saving men for not sending out the tail-block, but this was omitted only after experience had shown that it was useless to endeavor to send out the double line, to which it is an adjunct, in the enfeebled condition of the men on the wreck. Nevertheless, it must be said that the single line might have been passed through the block, with a bow-line in its end and a shot-line attached thereto, to enable the life-saving men to haul it back to the shore, as was done at the wreck of the Woodruff, by keeper Connell. In this way, and, indeed, in other ways, the tail-block might have been sent out, and the usual double hauling-line established, relieving the sailors of any share in the labor of rescue beyond the pulling out of the single line and securing

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the block. The idea, however, does not appear to have occurred to the surfmen present, nor to have been suggested by any of the experienced wreckers on the spot as spectators. Had this plan been thought of and carried into execution, the result of the wreck might probably have been materially changed.

The necessary preparations having been made, another shot was fired, which missed, but the one following fell near the mizzen rigging, and the line it carried was secured by the sailors. The single 1½-inch line was then bent on to it, and, after laborious effort on the part of the poor men in the rigging, was got on board about one o'clock, and made fast to the mizzen masthead, on the starboard or northerly side of the vessel.

Line communication was now at length established and the breeches-buoy was being rigged on for the first transit, when one of the sailors, named Henry Johnson, became exhausted and fell in an unconscious state into the sea. His loss greatly shocked the captain, who was lashed to the rigging, and Mrs. Sawyer was almost paralyzed by the spectacle.

This catastrophe was immediately succeeded by the first rescue. The breeches-buoy, with a bight of the shot-line by which the single part of the whip-line had been drawn to the vessel attached to it as a hauling-line, was pulled out to the wreck by those on board. It was agreed that the second

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mate, Emanuel Clausen, should make the endeavor to save the child first of all. For this purpose, holding the baby in his arms, he took his seat in the buoy, suspended on the traveler-rope by its pulley-block above the breakers. At a signal the life-saving crews pulled away at their end of the hauling-line, and the two began their fearful journey. They had been drawn about midway when the part of the hauling-line on board the vessel became entangled in the wreckage of the spanker-boom and could not be cleared by the men in the crosstrees. It was a moment of supreme horror. The buoy was held to the wreck by the entangled line, and the baby and her protector were stopped in the midst of the surf, halfway between ship and shore. In this terrible exigency the life-saving crews did the only thing that could be done — they ran up the beach in mass, hauling with all their strength, with the design of either clearing or breaking the line. If the line broke between the shore and the buoy, the infant and the man would still remain where they were and be quickly drowned in the torrents of the breakers. The suspense was short, for presently, by good fortune, the violent strain broke the line between them and the wreck, leaving the buoy free to come in. In an instant it was run through the surf to the beach, and the poor baby and the mate were seized, lifted out of the buoy, and carried with shouts of exultation to a wagon near by, which

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rattled away with them to a place of succor half a mile distant.

The excitement of the first rescue at once gave place to the contemplation of the seriousness of the situation of those remaining in the rigging of the wreck. The traveler-rope alone stretched between the beach and the mizzen head, and the necessitated breaking of the hauling-line for the deliverance of the couple just saved left the life-saving crew without immediate means of again sending off the breeches-buoy. A hasty consultation was held, and it was resolved to try to reach the wreck with the boat. The step was desperate and involved extreme danger. The sea had swollen tremendously, and such enormous breakers were tumbling over the nearly submerged hull that there was no more, at least, than a possibility that a boat might be able to live alongside, even if it survived the attempt to leave the beach; while, should it prove to be feasible to maintain a position near the masses of surf which incessantly broke over the miserable wreck, there was still the terrible problem how the people were to be got down and across them into the boat. The stake, therefore, rested upon the barest chance, but it was resolved to stand the hazard. A picked crew was selected from the men of both stations, Keeper Grimm of No. 18 taking the stroke oar; Keeper Martin of No. 19 took off his boots and coat, and seized the steering oar; and the perilous

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launch was made. The boat went off gallantly until it reached the fierce current which set between ship and shore, when, despite the utmost strength of the oarsmen, it was swept far northward of the vessel, and the baffled crew were forced to regain the beach. Another launch was at once made, the point of departure being taken farther down the beach, to allow for the stress of the current, and the oarsmen exerted themselves to the utmost. They succeeded in nearly reaching the bar on which the vessel lay, when a heavy sea struck the boat, throwing one man from his thwart, bruising the wrist of another, and knocking the keeper overboard. He caught as he went at the gunwale, which he seized, still retaining his steering oar, and was dragged back into the boat by the powerful arm of Keeper Grimm. The boat meanwhile lost way, and was in the fatal current. Again baffled, the discomfited crew had to make the shore.

The failure with the boat caused those upon the wreck to begin to lose hope. The sick captain and his wife had meanwhile become insensible, and within an hour later they both died, lashed to the rigging.

It was now about four o'clock in the afternoon. As soon as the second attempt with the boat had failed, the station-men endeavored to reëstablish the means of transit from the wreck by supplying the sailors in the crosstrees with a hauling-line.

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The Lyle gun was again fired, and threw a shot-line on to the vessel, but it could not be reached by the men. Another expedient was then resorted to. Keeper Martin waded out as far as possible into the surf and bent on a shot-line to the 1½-inch rope, which was still stretched from the mizzen head of the wreck to the beach, where it was held by a sand-anchor. The rope was then slacked from the sand-anchor, and, at a signal, hauled in by the sailors until the shot-line attached to it was in their hands. The breeches-buoy was then run on to the standing-rope, ready to be worked to and fro by the newly extended shot-line, and the standing-rope again secured to the beach by the sand-anchor. These operations were assisted in by Keeper Ridgway, of No. 17, and four of his crew, who had arrived upon the beach near sundown. Darkness had now set in and rain began to fall. With the exception of two or three persons, all the spectators left the beach, which was thus nearly abandoned to the members of the three life-saving crews, some of whom kept a bright fire burning to encourage the sailors, while the others assisted in getting off the breeches-buoy to the wreck, which was now undistinguishable. The intensity of the darkness made the work slow, but two trips were made by the buoy from the vessel, each bringing in safely two men. One of this quartette was the mate, from whom the life-saving crews learned that the

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captain and his wife were dead in the rigging, he having examined them some time before. There were, therefore, left upon the wreck only two living persons, Frank June and Richard Gordon. They had been all day the most hopeful and active men on board, and had agreed to leave the vessel last. The buoy was hauled out by them, and soon their voices were heard in the darkness, calling to the crews to haul away. They came rapidly in, the standing-line swaying in the surf with their weight, when suddenly the buoy was felt to stop as though the hauling-line was slowly twining around some part of the wreck. It came on again a few feet by jerks and finally stopped altogether. The unfortunate men had unaccountably neglected to cast off or cut the line behind them before leaving the vessel. Knowing that they could not long remain in the buoy, with the surf overwhelming them every instant, the station-men kept up a steady strain upon the shore-line, hoping to make the outer line, which had fouled in the wreck, give way. The last stroke of misfortune was now dealt, for it was the line they held that broke, and the hapless men were soon torn from the buoy by the breakers and drowned. Their bruised and disfigured bodies were cast up by the surf the next day, several miles north of the place where they met their doom. The body of the man who fell from the rigging at noon came on shore at the same time.

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Nothing living was now left upon the wreck, and in the late darkness the labors of the station crews ended. The next day, under the lead of Keeper Grimm, they went out in the boat and brought the bodies of Captain Sawyer and his wife ashore.

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VI

THE STEAMER VINDICATOR

An extraordinary and difficult rescue was effected by the life-saving crew of station No. 20, Third District, Long Island, aided by the crews of stations Nos. 19 and 21, on January 4, 1879. The case was that of the steamer Vindicator of New York. The steamer was bound from Fall River to Philadelphia. On January 3 the mercury fell to zero, and at night the wind hauled to the northwest and blew a hurricane. According to the statement of the captain and mate, a hundred tons of ice accumulated upon the bow of the steamer, so loading the vessel down by the head that her propeller and rudder were lifted to the surface of the water, and she became unmanageable, and drifted in this condition to Long Island beach, where she stranded on January 4, at half past four o'clock in the morning, one mile west of station No. 20 (Smith's Point), and 302 yards from the shore, by actual measurement. She was immediately discovered by Patrolman Hawkins, who fired his red Coston light, and rushed to the station. Keeper Joseph H. Bell and his crew at once hurried to the spot with the

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mortar apparatus. The ice was piled up in great blocks upon the beach from four to six feet high, and the water was full of ice in floating cakes, reaching to within forty feet of the vessel, and grinding and crunching along shore with the strong easterly wind and current. Under these circumstances, the use of the boat was impossible. The steamer lay head on to the beach, presenting but a small mark for the shot-line, and her top-gallant forecastle was a great hump or dome of smooth ice, formed by the accumulations of the spray and seas. To allow for the action of the wind in deflecting the shot-line from its course it was necessary to place the mortar somewhat east of the vessel, thus increasing the distance. Under these conditions the first shot fired reached the steamer, but struck upon the smooth mass of ice which domed the top-gallant forecastle, and necessarily glanced off, there being no bowsprit nor stay upon which it might catch, and fell into the sea. The line attached to the shot was cut by the jagged ice while the life-saving crew were hauling it back, and was lost. The second and third shots fell short. A fourth shot threw the line against the vessel, but an effort on board to catch it failed. At the next shot the line parted. The sixth shot fell over the spring-stay between the fore and mainmasts, and was secured by the crew of the steamer.

During these operations the life-saving crews

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of Stations Nos. 19 (Sidney Smith, keeper) and 21 (Silas B. Rogers, keeper), appeared upon the scene, and it was the line of the latter station which had been successfully carried to the steamer by the last shot.

An untoward incident now occurred. While the lines were being got on board three men committed the frequent and dangerous error of attempting to land independently of the assistance of the life-saving crew. They got from the steamer into a boat, which narrowly escaped swamping at the outset, and was then swept along the edge of the broad mass of floating ice by the strong lateral current, over a mile east of the station and two miles from the ship, without getting any nearer the shore. Knowing the peril which these rash sailors had exposed themselves to, some of the life-saving men followed them in their course along the shore. Finally they reached a small open space of water, and making for the land their boat was immediately capsized. It was by a great and hazardous effort that the life-saving men succeeded in dragging them from the icy water. They were badly frost-bitten, and were quickly carried to the station and cared for.

So many men had followed to engage in this rescue that operations at the ship were delayed until their return, when the hawser and hauling-lines were set up. A new lot of difficulties now arose. The ropes were stretched from the shore

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to the steamer, for the great distance of 302 yards, and as the weather was bitterly cold it was absolutely necessary not to let them sag into the water, as in this case they would become clogged with ice and the hauling-lines prevented from running through the sheaves of the pulley-blocks. Fortunately, a number of persons had come across the frozen bay in sleighs from the mainland, and with their aid the almost impossible task was performed of keeping the ropes so taut that they could not dip into the water. The strain was so great that the bushing in the pulley-blocks became loosened, and the friction set the blocks on fire. This new danger, which menaced the ropes and threatened to frustrate the rescue, was met with judgment. The captain of the steamer kept the ignited block upon the vessel quenched, using strong brine instead of water, which would have frozen. These sustained efforts resulted by two P. M. in the first man being safely drawn ashore in the breeches-buoy along the hawser. The captain, who was the last man to leave the ship, came to land by the same means at four o'clock. Thus, one by one, the fifteen persons on board were delivered, making, in addition to the three from the capsized boat, eighteen persons saved. The great distance of the steamer from the shore; her bad position, lying head on, as a mark for the wreck ordnance; her having neither bowsprit nor yards, and being encased with slippery ice, thus

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adding to the difficulty of getting a line over her; the repeated loss of shots and the severing of shot-lines by the jagged floes; the spread of impassable leaping ice between the beach and the vessel; the galling interruption to effort, in the beginning of long-delayed success, caused by the necessity of rescuing the three men in the boat; the imperative need and the difficulty of keeping the ropes stretched for over 300 yards clear of the water; the unexpected ignition of the pulley-blocks; the protraction of the severe labor; the intense cold of the weather; — all formed a series of conditions and impediments such as are rarely encountered; yet for twelve hours the brave surfmen stuck to their work with unfaltering determination, patiently meeting every successive exigency, and never resting till they had saved the last man. They suffered much with the cold, and by night were so completely exhausted that they could only perform partial patrol.

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VII

THE SCHOONER W. B. PHELPS

On the 20th of November, 1879, two men, the forlorn survivors of a crew of seven, were rescued from the wreck of the schooner W. B. Phelps under circumstances in which ingenuity, persistence, endurance of extreme hardship, and the most perilous daring mingled to form a striking instance of heroic enterprise. The evening previous, at about seven o'clock, during a heavy northwest gale and a very severe snowstorm, the vessel drove ashore about a mile east of the dock of Glen Arbor, Mich. She came on stern foremost, and her centre-board being down broke up her decks so completely that only a small fragment of them remained on the extreme forward part of the vessel. On this fragment, hardly sufficient for a foothold, her mate and one of the sailors remained all night; the vessel being covered with ice, heeled over with her lee rail under water, the rail upon her weather side all gone, and the sea pouring across her between stem and stern like a cataract. Five of her crew had perished, and it was only at daybreak that a citizen of Glen Arbor discovered the two miserable

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survivors clinging to the bows. The alarm he gave brought to the scene a number of the townspeople, who sledded to the spot an old leaky flat-bottomed fish-boat, the only craft obtainable, which was at once launched by William A. Clark, Charles A. Rosman, John Tobin, Welby C. Ray, and Willard W. Tucker. The effort these brave men made to reach the wreck was soon baffled, the terrible sea and wind driving back the boat half filled with water, with her crew drenched. Amidst the cries of the two men on the wreck for help, the boat was dragged about twenty rods to windward to get the advantage of a strong current, and the same crew, with the exception of Willard W. Tucker, whose place was supplied by Howard Daniels, made another attempt and succeeded in reaching the stern of the vessel, to which they made fast by a line and surveyed the situation. The two sailors were away from them in the bows, unapproachable on the windward side of the hull by reason of the terrible sea, and inaccessible on the leeward side on account of a great mass of spars, timbers, sails, rigging, and deck plank, which hung over the whole length of the bulwarks and thrashed and bounded in the water constantly, menacing approach with destruction. The prospect of rescue was therefore gloomy, and as the boat was fast filling it was concluded that what could possibly be done must be decided on shore, to which the crew then returned, with their boat

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stern foremost, not daring to turn it for fear of the heavy seas.

When they gained the land they were so drenched, chilled, and covered with ice from head to foot that, leaving a man on the beach so that the poor sailors would not think they were deserted, they ran to their homes and put on dry clothing. Returning as soon as possible, they matured the resolve to wedge the boat into the mass of wreckage which crashed up and down alongside of the vessel, and endeavor to get the sailors across it. With this purpose they again started for the wreck, the place of Howard Daniels being this time filled by John Blanchfield.

Despite their efforts to make headway, the boat at times fell astern, the unhappy sailors meanwhile shouting, "Pull hard, boys; pull hard!" The hard pulling thus implored, at last enabled them to drive the boat into a small opening in the floating débris, about sixty feet from where the two men were standing. Here their position was one of extreme danger, all their strength and skill being brought into constant play to prevent the boat from being crushed by the spars and timbers which almost inclosed them. Still more hazardous was the task of getting the two nearly helpless sailors for a distance of sixty feet over this mass. A line was thrown to the mate, John Hourigan, the end of which he fastened around his body, and steadied by it he began his desperate

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journey over the pitching and tossing tangle, pausing frequently and clinging, as the seas flew over him. By these efforts he contrived to crawl to within about fifteen feet of the boat, and on to a piece of deck. The crew then worked the boat over an intervening piece of deck, letting it remain partially resting thereon, and, thus getting within reach of Hourigan, took him on board. The other man, Edward J. Igoe, who had followed in the same way, being weaker than his companion and nearly helpless through exposure, came very near being lost. As he crept along over the constantly mixing spars and timbers, some of them caught his leg and held him so fast that he had not strength enough to get it free. He was feebly struggling in this terrible strait, when two of the gallant rescuers sprang out, leaping from point to point over the tumbling débris, reached and extricated him, and one of them, gripping him by the collar, dragged him on the run along a spar about twenty feet, until the piece of deck was reached on which the mate had been, where he was seized by the others, and got into the boat. The boat was now shoved off the slab of deck on which it partly lay, and cautiously manœuvred, stern foremost, to land, followed by the furious seas. It was filled with water by the time the shore was reached, and a score of men rushed into the surf from the delirious crowd, and hauled it with its load up on the beach. The terrible

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work thus triumphantly ended had lasted about eight hours.

When the mate stepped from the boat upon the land, he threw up his arms, and, with the tears flowing down his face, he cried: "Thank God! I shall see my children again!" To men capable of the noble rescue achieved by these five heroes of Glen Arbor, it is certain that no tribute from admiring fellow townsmen, nor from the public at large, could equal the sweet honors of these words.

The two sailors, saved from an exposure on the wreck of twenty hours, were taken a mile away to a hotel (Igoe being carried a part of the distance), where they were cared for during their stay of about a week at Glen Arbor.

The gold medal of the Life-Saving Service was severally awarded to the five rescuers, William A. Clark, Charles A. Rosman, Welby C. Ray, John Tobin, and John Blanchfield. No men ever better deserved the token by which the nation commemorates such deeds of valor and charity.

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VIII

A NIGHT'S WORK

THE severest tempest on the Atlantic coast during the year 1880 was that of February 3. It resulted from the meeting of two storms, one from the northwest and one from the southwest, and extended from Maine to Louisiana, seeming to focus chiefly on the coasts of New York and New Jersey. The summer buildings at Coney Island were well smashed up by the sea and wind, but the heaviest damage appears to have been wrought at and around Long Branch. All the hotels at that place were more or less injured. The roofs of the Mansion House and United States Hotel were carried away. Many of the windows of the Ocean House were staved in. The flooring of the pier was torn up and swept away by the sea, while the gale also wrenched off the roof and stanchions of the pavilion on the pier, a building 350 feet long. Most of the summer cottages and villas suffered ravage. The telegraph wires were down in every direction. Between Jersey City and Long Branch all the meadow lands were inundated. For twelve hours from midnight the storm continued its devastation. It began with snow and sleet and ended

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with heavy rain. The sea was the highest known for many years, dashing against the bluffs at Long Branch in great volumes, and the wind, at times, reached the velocity of eighty-four miles an hour, being a veritable hurricane. It was a season of hardship and danger for the life-saving crews upon the Jersey coast, several of which rendered service so noble as to excite general enthusiasm. During the twelve hours the tempest lasted there were five wrecks within the field of four consecutive stations, while another engaged a station a few miles beyond.

The instance first in order is that of the three-masted schooner Stephen Harding, of Damariscotta, Maine, laden with hard pine lumber, and bound from Cedar Keys, Fla., to New York. The crew numbered six persons, including the captain, Stephen Harding, whose wife was also on the vessel. In addition, there was a young sailor, named William Ray, who had leaped over her bulwarks an hour before, from the schooner Kate Newman, which had collided in the gale with the Stephen Harding, six or seven miles from shore, staving in her starboard bows and knocking off her anchor, and then going down with all on board except this survivor. A vivid picture of this occurrence is given by Captain Harding: "We sighted the schooner dead ahead," he says; "she came right out of the darkness and stood on the top of a big wave, almost over our heads. The next

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instant we came together. The next we separated, and then she was out of sight in the darkness, leaving one of her men on our deck." The anchor which the collision carried from the starboard bows of the Stephen Harding hung by fifteen or twenty fathoms of chain over her side, and could not be cleared, causing her to fall off from her true course and drag to leeward, and finally sent her ashore, where she struck about a mile north of Station No. 2, Fourth District, New Jersey (Captain J. W. Edwards, keeper), at two o'clock in the morning, in a thick snowstorm, a gale raging and rising, and a heavy sea. At this hour the patrol of Station No. 2 changed, and Charles Rex started out to the north on his beat. He had gone nearly a mile when he saw a light ahead. Confused in the darkness by the wind and the whirling snow, the patrolman did not know just where he was, nor how far he had gone, and at first thought the light he saw was the lantern of an advancing patrol from the station beyond. He hastened forward, and in a few minutes saw that it issued from the cabin skylight of a schooner stranded in the surf about 250 yards from shore. Coming abreast of the vessel, he saw the red light in her port rigging, and at once fired his Coston signal to let the sailors know their peril was seen, and then, running down into the surf as far as he dared, he shouted to them not to attempt to come ashore in their own boats, but await the help soon coming.

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A few minutes later his voice was heard outside the station, calling to those within to turn out, which was soon done, and the crew, with the exception of one man away on the south patrol, started for the wreck with the apparatus. The task of hauling was a severe one. The snow was thick upon the beach, the drifts more than knee-deep and fast accumulating, badly clogging the cart-wheels; and the wind, steadily increasing, impeded the advance by its force, and blew the snow and sand together straight into the faces of the men as they tugged at their load. It was with the greatest effort and difficulty that they made their way, but by half past three they were abreast of the wreck, and at once began operations. Despite the darkness and the blinding storm of snow and sand, the first shot from the Lyle gun laid the line across the almost invisible vessel, handy to the sailors, who seized it. The whip-line was soon bent on and hauled on board, followed by the hawser; but there being no lantern on deck, the respective tally-boards were thought to be bits of wreck stuff which had got fastened into the lines, and their instructions for setting up the gear not being seen, the matter went by guesswork, and the hawser was fastened to the mast below the hauling-lines, when it should have been above. The life-saving crew sent off the breeches-buoy three times in succession, hauling it back each time empty, and, not being able to see it when it

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reached the vessel's side on account of the darkness, only knew by its returning unoccupied and by the whip-line having a turn around the hawser, that something was wrong. Sending it out, however, a fourth time, it came ashore again with one of the crew, a German, who reported that the captain's wife was on board, and that the ship's people thought of remaining on the vessel until daylight. As the tide was then rising, and the condition of the sea growing more alarming, Surfman Wilson was sent off in the breeches-buoy to tell them to leave the vessel. As soon as he got on board he found what was the matter with the lines, and in about ten minutes rearranged them in good working order. It was fortunate for the people on the schooner that he came to hurry them off, for she was then beginning to thump on the bottom, and as the tide rose she was swept fore and aft, while, by daylight, the spray was flying twenty feet high in her rigging over the decks submerged in breakers. The first person Surfman Wilson sent to land in the breeches-buoy was one of the sailors. Mrs. Harding followed, and at once upon her arrival was sheltered behind the cart, which was the best that could then be done for her. One by one the men followed, each, upon landing, turning to with the life-saving crew at the hauling to keep themselves warm. When the last person was sent off, Surfman Wilson himself jumped into the breeches-buoy and was drawn ashore. Patrolman Ferry,

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who had come from his beat and joined the crew during their operations, at once set out again on his south patrol, while Patrolman Rex resumed his march to the north. The rest of the crew were left to get the gear back to the station, while the keeper, as the storm was raging more violently, fearing that the rescued might perish, as they were all soaked through, and getting very cold, started at once with them for the station a mile distant, where they remained storm-bound for several days.

At the same time the Stephen Harding stranded, the brig Castalia, of Bath, Maine, also struck the beach about three fourths of a mile from Station No. 3, Fourth District, New Jersey. The vessel was bound from Galveston to New York with a cargo of cotton, and had on board a crew of ten men, including the captain, and one lady passenger, Mrs. W. C. Seymour of Ohio. Half an hour after she struck, Patrolman Disbrow saw, by looking across the wind after he had gone by, it being impossible to look against the gale and the flying snow and sand, the dim gleam of her port light, and by going down to the water's edge was able to just trace her outline as she lay nearly broadside on, about 150 yards from shore. After burning the usual Coston signal for the encouragement of those on board, he ran for the station and aroused the crew. A note was left for a man then absent on the south patrol, bidding him join his

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comrades at the wreck when he returned, and the six men set out through the blinding snowstorm with the mortar cart. The drag over the sand and through the snow-drifts, in the face of the gale, was severe; but within an hour the group, covered with snow and sleet, were abreast of the spot of light which was the only token of the stranded vessel, and the keeper, through his trumpet, hailed her sailors to look out for a line. A white Coston light was then burned, disclosing the position of the vessel, which was lying about a quarter to head on, her head pointing to northwest. The keeper (Captain A. H. West) then proceeded to charge the Lyle gun and get his elevation and range, while one of the men held a rubber blanket to windward of his face to shield it from the driven sleet and sand. His object was to lay the line on deck that it might be readily found by those on board. In this difficult aim he succeeded admirably, the shot flying at the first fire between the foreyard and forestay and leaving the line on the forecastle deck, where the sailors at once seized it. The whip-line and hawser were then successively hauled out and made fast on the vessel, and the work of setting them up on shore was entered on by the life-saving crew. In this, the drill with the apparatus, as arranged by the manual of the service, stood the crew in good stead, as it did all the crews who wrought that night at wrecks. The lanterns were of little use, thickly coated as they

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were with snow and sleet, and their light faintly glimmered in the darkness; but each man was at his post with his own part assigned him, silently executing the task with which frequent practice had made him familiar, though in a light so feeble that the lines and implements he handled could not be seen, the independent operations combining in due time until the whole tackle was adjusted and the breeches-buoy was running out on the taut hawser to the vessel under the hands of the surfmen. Two men were first brought ashore in rapid succession, and then came the lady passenger, Mrs. Seymour. The vessel rolled so violently during the landing that despite the endeavors to keep it taut by hauling on the tackle, the hawser would frequently slacken, dipping the breeches-buoy with its burden into the surf, whence the life-saving men, going in as far as possible, dragged the rescued people up on the beach. These efforts resulted in the speedy landing of the eleven persons on board, who then set out for the station. The captain was so exhausted that he had to be supported, and immediately upon arrival put to bed, when restoratives were administered to him. It was a quarter past six in the morning when the station was reached, the rescue having occupied only three and a half hours from the starting of the mortar cart on its toilsome way to the return. The captain and sailors were kept and cared for at the station for two days,

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Mrs. Seymour being taken to the hospitable keeper's dwelling. The brig outrode the storm, being a stanch vessel, and was subsequently got off.

A little earlier, or about an hour after midnight, the schooner E. C. Babcock, of Somers' Point, N. J., laden with cord-wood and bound from Virginia to New York, driving near the shore in the storm, was come upon by Patrolman Van Brunt, of Station No. 4, Fourth District, New Jersey, who, by looking across the wind, direct vision being impossible, caught sight of her red port running light, and comprehending her danger, at once fired his Coston signal. The warning came late, however, the schooner having got too near the beach to wear or tack, and in ten minutes after she struck within about a hundred yards of the shore. Patrolman Van Brunt immediately went running before the gale for the station, a quarter of a mile to the south, and roused the crew. The keeper, Charles H. Valentine, was quite sick at the time, but he and his men turned out with the loaded mortar cart, and traveled for the wreck with all speed. Although at times the wheels so sank in the hollows of the beach where the snow and slush were deepest that they had to be lifted out, the hard journey was accomplished in a very short time. The position of the vessel was mainly determined by the dull red spot shed by her port lantern. With this to guide his aim,

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the keeper attempted the difficult feat of firing a shot-line across the deck of the schooner, beneath her rigging, in order that it might be quickly found by the sailors. The first attempt was baffled by the breaking of the line, which had become frozen stiff with snow and spray during the brief interval of its exposure in the line-box before firing. A second shot had better fortune, carrying the line between the forestay and jib halyards, where it was seized and hauled in by the men on board. A few minutes of disciplined labor in the darkness, which, as in the other instances, the frost-muffled lanterns could not illumine, sufficed to bend on the hauling-lines and hawser, which were soon dragged out to the vessel, and to set up the shore part of the apparatus. The first person that came ashore was a colored man, who told the crew that the captain's wife and two children were on board. The breeches-buoy went swiftly back and was quickly hauled ashore again, bearing in it the captain's wife. The next to come was the captain with his little daughter, six years old, in his arms. Following him came the mate, holding fast the captain's other girl, ten years old. Then, one by one, three sailors were drawn to land, being all on board. Haste characterized this energetic rescue. Within one hour and fifty minutes after the vessel struck, a mile and a quarter from the station, and despite the great impediments of the night and the winter storm, the eight

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people on board the crumbling schooner were safe on land. They were taken at once, being pretty wet, to a summer cottage near by, where the custodian cared for them properly. The deserted vessel, which was beginning to break up while they were leaving her, went utterly to pieces by ten o'clock the next morning, her fragments and her cargo of cord-wood rolling and tumbling about in the surf as they slowly drifted southward.

Their work at the wreck of the E. C. Babcock over, Captain Valentine and the crew of Station No. 4 reloaded the cart with the apparatus and such of the lines as were not attached to the wreck, and, dragging this burden, arrived at the station by five o'clock in the morning. After taking breakfast they fell to work, with the exception of two men who went out on patrol, at the task of cleaning and arranging the lines and getting the apparatus in order for service. At ten o'clock in the forenoon they were still busy in the boat room at this labor, every one at work, when a patrolman bounded in with the startling news that a brig was coming dead for the shore. A momentary excitement seized the men, but the keeper held them at their tasks, simply commanding them to hurry. Indeed, nothing else could be done until the apparatus was in readiness. A few minutes after, the keeper went to the door and looked out over the swollen surf, tumbling uproariously upon the beach to the very sand-hills. The snow had ceased,

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and, although it was raining, the air was clear and everything could be seen for a great distance. The gale was directly on shore, and running straight before it, under her split sails, with the tremendous sea and wind behind her, the keeper saw a brig rushing toward the station. It was the Spanish brig Augustina, bound from Havana to New York, with a cargo mainly of cedar wood and hides, and having eight men on board. Several of the crew could be seen on the pitching deck, huddled up against the house. There was a man at the wheel steering with apparent composure. As the vessel came racing on her course, a mass of water suddenly rose over her stern, and fell upon this man, completely covering him. It rolled off presently, disclosing him still standing at the wheel, and as it sheeted over the bulwarks and ran along the deck, it was observed that he gave the spokes one rapid twirl and again stood still. A moment afterward the vessel struck head on with a tremendous shock, and the next instant she swung around broadside to the sea, and heeled down upon her side, with the water scattering and flying all over her. A throng of men and women, finally numbering about two hundred persons, were gathering upon the sand-hills, before this spectacle, and in ten minutes after the vessel struck, the crew of the station were on the ground with the apparatus.

The Lyle gun was hastily prepared and the shot fired, but the line, which had been some time

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in the station and was the only one then available, broke as it fled from the muzzle, and another shot had the same result. The brig, in the mean time, had been driven farther in toward the shore, and Surfman Garrett H. White, by following a receding sea, running down into the surf as far as possible, and putting forth his utmost strength, succeeded in casting the heaving-stick and line on board just forward of the main rigging. The sailors seized the cord, and the whip-line, being bent on to its shore end by the crew, was speedily hauled on board. An ugly mishap now occurred. The sailors, getting the tail-block on the end of the whip, pulled it about on deck, but did not appear to know what to do with it, and paid no attention whatever to the tally-board appended to the lines and bearing instructions in two languages for setting them up on board. The E. C. Babcock meanwhile had gone to pieces a quarter of a mile up the beach, and presently, while the sailors were dallying with the whip-line, its slack became entangled with the drift stuff, composed of the fragments of that vessel and of her cargo of cord-wood, which had floated down with the southerly set or current. This current was interrupted by the hull of the Augustina, which caused an eddying swirl that held the great mass of the wreckage between the beach and the vessel, where it was swept out by the undertow to be thrown in again and again with great force by the inrunning breakers. The

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whip-line thus fouled was carried by the eddy towards the bow of the brig, where it was caught and held by the port anchor. The life-saving men vainly endeavored to direct the sailors to properly arrange the line, but as the latter were acquainted with the Spanish language only, and failed even to comprehend the warning gestures of the men on the beach, they hurriedly used the line as they supposed it was intended they should, and undertook to come ashore by it, hand over hand. This would have been a hazardous venture in such a sea under the most favorable circumstances, but the drift stuff before described, tossing about in inconceivable confusion, increased their peril to the point of apparently sure destruction, which would certainly have followed but for the helping hands of strong men at the risk of their own safety. The course the sailors took could only have been adopted in the temerity of extreme fear. The life-saving men tried to arrest the undertaking by shouts and vehement gesticulations, but vainly, for in a few moments one of the half-naked group was hanging to the line and pulling himself along through the sea. He had made about half the distance when the surf flung him over the whip-line. He held on, but as he came down, the two parts of the line, crossing as it turned, caught him by the neck and held him fast, at once arresting his progress and almost strangling him. Instantly Surfman Garrett H. White rushed waist-deep into

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the breakers, holding to the line, and disentangled him. At that moment a rush of the driftwood threw both men off their feet and they were swept from the line, but Surfman White, by a desperate effort, regained a foothold in the undertow, and still keeping his grip on the man, after a brief and violent scramble, succeeded in landing him. Meanwhile, two more of the sailors were swinging along the line. Surfman John Van Brunt plunged forward for the foremost, but before he got to him the driftwood knocked him off his feet, and he was thrown into imminent peril, from which he was rescued by a number of fishermen on the beach who threw themselves into file with locked hands, and the end man getting hold of him he was hauled out. In the mean time Surfman White and an outsider had dragged in the sailor. The third sailor from the wreck was on his way when the sea suddenly tore him from his hold. For a few moments he struggled in the water, then falling upon a clump of driftwood, he lay sprawling, struggling to make the shore and beaten down by the surf as he strove to get up on his hands and knees. Surfman Potter sprang for him, but was thrown from his feet on to the driftwood, falling upon his back, and was held down by the whip-line, which was suddenly tautened by the current across his breast. By an overmastering effort he managed to extricate himself from the line, and was washed out seaward, but got a spar on

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the next incoming breaker and made out to struggle to the beach. During these efforts Surfman Ferguson had reached the imperiled sailor and dragged him to the land. Surfman Lockwood went for the fourth sailor and was hurled from his feet into the surf like his comrades, but kept hold of his man and brought him in. In this way, by dauntless hand-to-hand grapples amidst the tumbling wreckage in the surf, man by man five sailors of the Augustina were saved. It is as wonderful as fortunate that the gallant rescue was accomplished without loss of life. The risks run by the life-saving crew, and those who aided them, were extreme. "Three of my men," Captain Valentine afterwards remarked, dwelling upon certain stages of the conflict, "I never expected to see again." The rescued men were all nearly naked. Every one was bareheaded and barefooted. One had on only a tattered shirt; another nothing but a pair of torn trousers. No one man had two garments. They were nearly frozen and utterly exhausted. Two of them had to be brought to by restoratives, being on the verge of perishing with cold. They were all cared for at the station to the extent of its means. None of these men could speak English, but it was presently learned through an interpreter that their captain, whose name is given as Aritz, was still on board the vessel, where two of the sailors also were.

After the tide had ebbed, a party of surfmen

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went on board the brig, where the captain was found lying in his berth, unconscious from a gun-shot wound in his head. It appears that the brig's sails having split during the gale, she had become helpless, and there was nothing left but to allow her to drive on shore. The captain, realizing the loss which was about to befall him, being part owner of the vessel and cargo, and having no hope of escaping with his life, bade farewell to his men as the vessel was about to enter the outer breakers, and retiring to his cabin, deliberately shot himself. He was taken ashore and carried to the station, where his wound was dressed by a surgeon who happened to be among the spectators. He was conveyed to a hotel the next morning, from whence after a fortnight he was taken to a hospital in New York, and at the last accounts was recovering.

The Augustina later in the day broke in the middle, and was soon completely demolished by the sea. Her mainmast, which was about 120 feet long, was ultimately placed as a flagstaff on an elevation overlooking the ocean where she was destroyed.

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IX

THE SCHOONER GEORGE TAULANE

A WRECK on the New Jersey coast upon that fateful date of February 3, 1880, became the occasion, on the part of the life-saving crews engaged, for a perseverance so noble and loyal under the most discouraging hardships and trials, as to reach by itself the high level of heroism, without taking into account the dauntless courage which accompanied it. The vessel was the George Taulane, of Camden, N. J., a schooner bound from Virginia to New York, with a cargo of cord-wood, and a crew, the captain included, of seven men. The evening before, the vessel was off the Highlands of Navesink, in 11 fathoms of water, with every prospect of soon reaching her destination, when the snowstorm began, and the thick weather so shut in around her that it became dangerous to attempt the run for Sandy Hook. The captain accordingly stood off shore, getting the vessel into 15 fathoms of water. Gradually the storm grew into a furious gale, in which the schooner labored heavily (under a two-reefed mainsail), and at two o'clock in the morning the deck-load started, and the perils of the men on board the plunging

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and staggering vessel in the uproar and confusion of the tempest were increased by the falling about the deck of big sticks of wood in the darkness. To make matters as bad as possible, the schooner was soon afterwards discovered to be on fire, communicated probably from the forecastle stove, and the flames spread to her deck-load and held with such tenacity that it was at one time thought she would have to be abandoned for the chances of an open boat in that terrible sea. At length, however, although all hands were constantly needed to manage the storm-tossed vessel, labor was spared to get the ignited portion of the deck-load overboard, and with great difficulty the fire was quenched. During all these troubles the run of the vessel was lost, and despite the steady effort to keep off shore, allowance had not been made for leeway, which the high deck-load had rendered great, and by eight o'clock the next morning, looking through the storm of sleet, the captain, to his despair, beheld the beach, to which the vessel was directly drifting. Hoping still to save her, the captain let go both anchors when about a mile from land. This step proved disastrous and made the rescue of those on board a task of stupendous difficulty. The anchors at first clawed the bottom and brought the vessel head to the wind; but immediately after, the strong current setting to the southward, and the force of the storm, made them drag without holding, and

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the vessel, broadside to the gale, swung helplessly in the trough of the tremendous sea, in which she lay drifting, rolling fearfully, the water making clean breaches over her, staving and rending, and sweeping everything off her deck, and not giving the men time to slip the cables, but only to scramble up aloft for their lives. In this plight, three of them in the fore rigging and four in the main, the violent swaying of the hull almost jerking them from their hold, they plowed slowly through the breakers, going along with the current, the sea running in torrents over the deck below, the beach very gradually drawing near, and the sense of doom in every heart, when they saw the life-saving crew of Station No. 11, Fourth District, New Jersey, following them along the shore with lines and heaving-sticks in their hands, the whole attitude and aspect of the group significant of the intention of assistance. The captain afterwards said that the very fact of seeing this determined squad gave new life to his then almost despairing men. The life-saving crew had seen the vessel nearing the beach, and when she had dropped her anchors and begun to drag along the coast, being then at a point something over two miles south of Station No. 11, they followed her, joined by a few fishermen who were upon the beach at the time.

They knew that no boat could get off from the beach in such a sea, and they took only the heaving-sticks and lines, because they wisely calculated

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upon the vessel's grounding near Station No. 12, below, upon which they depended for apparatus. The patrolman of No. 12 had meanwhile seen the vessel something over a mile north of that station when she dropped her anchors, and hurrying back notified the keeper, Captain Wm. P. Chadwick, who at once ordered out the mortar cart with the apparatus and started for the wreck with the crew. In addition to the enormity of the surf, the tide was unusually full, being four feet higher on the beach than at ordinary high tides. The beach consequently was all covered with a frothing flood, and the only road to the wreck was across the skirting beach hills of sand. In a number of places these hills had been cloven by the battering sea, and sluices had formed in which the water rushed up each minute under the pressure of the surf, and poured back again with swift refluence as the flood fell away. In these rushing streams quantities of wreck débris, soon to be formidably increased, were already tossing hither and thither, menacing with at least bruises the adventurous crosser, whose hardships and perils would be further augmented by the quicksand character of the bottom of these rough courses. Hence it will be understood, the crews then journeying toward each other (in the case of that of No. 12, burdened with a cart-load of apparatus), besides generally slopping along through sand and water in the numerous hollows of the dwarf hills, had often to

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wade hip-deep and at times waist-deep across these ugly fords, where the bottom drew in the feet with a strong suction, and the water was full of pieces of fractured plank and joist, tumbling about to wound or maim whomsoever they chanced to get near. At the moment of starting, the crew of No. 12 were joined by a man from No. 11, who buckled to the cart with the rest. The conditions of travel over the inundated waste made hauling by hand necessary for at least portions of the distance, but a team of horses had been taken along by Keeper Chadwick, and followed the cart. It was half past eight when the journey began. The wind was then blowing hard, and the sleet came down furiously. On the right of the expedition was the sea raging and roaring, with breakers extending farther out from the beach than perhaps had ever been beheld before; on every other side was a dismal stretch of interflooded knolls of sand. The loaded cart thus plodded on for about a quarter of a mile. The horses were then hitched to and got it a half mile farther, when a deep sluiceway was reached where they refused to pull, and the men took hold and hauled the load across, waist-deep in water. The team was again used until another sluiceway intervened, through which the men once more dragged the mortar cart. The horses were then put on again, but a lower portion of the coast being soon reached, the water got so deep and the sand cut away so fast under the

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wheels, that they could not draw, and the men took the burden in hand and tugged with it until they came abreast the wreck, which was between nine and ten o'clock. There they met and were reinforced by Keeper Britton C. Miller and his crew of No. 11, who were still following the vessel down, accompanied by six brave volunteers. The rescuing party now numbered nineteen men.

A singular and memorable struggle was now entered upon. The vessel slowly drifted, fearfully rolling, her hull almost submerged in the foaming seas which fled across it. She was about 400 yards from shore. The seven men were in her rigging. One of them hung by his arms over a ratline, with one leg through below, and Keeper Chadwick at once remarked, "There is one man gone; we will never save him." Without delay the Lyle gun was planted on the summit of a sand-hill and fired, and the line leaped from the muzzle across the flying jib-stay. Here, unfortunately, it could not be used by the men on board, and had to be hauled back. The vessel continued to drag her anchors to the south, and the heroic march along her flank and through the floods and sluices was begun. The clefts in the hills embanking the beach had increased, and the way was freely trenched with tide-filled runnels of various depths and breadths, through which the men splashed and staggered with their load. With great labor and difficulty 200 yards were made, and a sand-

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top was reached, from which another shot was at once fired. The line being now heavier from the wet, and the point of unsubmerged ground the crew had gained farther from the vessel, this shot fell short. The cart was reloaded, and the men, with severe toil, got on about 400 yards to another unflooded hillock, from whence a third shot was fired, but the line parted. The vessel was still reeling along shore in the southerly set of the current, with the seven wretched men in the rigging. The devoted crews again loaded up the cart and resumed their toilsome attendance upon her course. From first to last their difficulties and the perils which beset them never slackened a moment. The wheels of the cart, in coast phrase, "sanded down" so rapidly — that is, sank so quickly in the infiltrated soil — that the conveyance had to be constantly kept on the move lest it should be lost. Often the cart had to be partially unloaded and portions of the apparatus carried by the crews to lighten it sufficiently to make progress possible, and at other times the men would have to fling themselves upon the wheels and hold them with all their strength to prevent the cart from being capsized by the inequalities of the submerged ground, or the overwhelming inbursts of the sea rushing high over the axles. All the time, moreover, the ocean fury had been gradually tearing off and smashing the upper works of the vessel's hull, and scattering off the

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pieces, together with her deck-load of cord-wood, as she drifted along. This steadily continued, and the surf was full of this débris, which was constantly hurled up over the sand-hills right in the path of the advancing life-savers. The sluices, with their constant ebbs and flows, were full of splinters of wreck and cord-wood billets; and in fording, the men's attention was about equally divided between steadying and hauling through the cart-load of apparatus, and avoiding the onset of these drifting projectiles. On the less inundated ground the danger continued, the wreck stuff assuming here partly the character of missiles, a sudden overburst of the sea, half carrying on the water, half flinging through the air great sticks of wood upon the crew. Several of the men were knocked down by these flying pieces. Others suffered bruises and contusions. Four months afterward, Keeper Chadwick's right arm was still lame from one of the blows. The escapes were numerous. It was with great difficulty that the men could keep their feet in this constant onslaught and pelting of driftwood, which the vessel supplied the whole way with her every roll.

But not a man fell away, or flinched from the work before him. The volunteers, like the crews, bore the racking labor with the same indomitable courage and composure, and the same disciplined obedience to the direction of the leader, every mind bent only upon the rescue. The care and

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patience observed by the men in their operations were no less remarkable than their noble hardihood. Not the least difficult of their tasks was that of keeping the lines, and especially the guns and powder, dry in the universal drench around them, and it is difficult to understand how they contrived it; for aside from the number of actual firings, wherever a momentary pause of the vessel as she grazed bottom, or a slowing of her motion, seemed to offer an opportunity for action, at least a dozen times, and probably more, the cart was hurriedly unloaded on the nearest eminence, the gun planted and the shot-line arranged for the effort, when the wreck would suddenly roll away upon her course, and the men would have to reload the cart and toil on again after her. In this way, and with these interruptions, they worked down along the beach to No. 12, and a quarter of a mile beyond it, when a chance offered for another shot; but the line parted. The crew again moved stubbornly on. It was now noon, and suddenly the man so long seen hanging in the rigging fell into the sea and was gone. The crew still followed the vessel with unslackened activity. Half an hour later, they saw another man drop lifeless from the ratlines. Laboring forward now for the rescue of the remaining five, they suffered a misfortune. In staggering and floundering through one of the worst sluiceways with the cart, the gun toppled off into the flood and was lost. A desperate search was at once made, and finally the gun

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was found in four or five feet of water, fished up and wiped dry, and carried thenceforth by the stout keeper on his shoulder. A man was dispatched back to No. 12 for a dry shot-line, while the crew moved on to a point three quarters of a mile below the station, where they got another chance to fire a shot, which, however, fell short, the tide having forced the firing party farther and farther back on the hills as they advanced, and the line, too, being weighted with moisture. The cart was again reloaded, and the march resumed. A mile below the station the man overtook them with the dry shot-line, and chance offering, the sixth shot was fired. This time it was a success. The line flew between the foremast and the jib-stay, and the cut sweeping the bight of the line into the side of the vessel, the sailors got hold of it and fastened it to the fore and main rigging. As the schooner still continued to drift and roll, nothing could yet be done; but while the greater part of the force loaded up the cart and trudged on with it, three or four kept fast hold of the shore end of the shot-line, and kept pace with the wreck in leash. At the end of another quarter of a mile, the vessel suddenly struck the tide setting north, stopped, swung head off shore, and worked back to her anchors under the comb of the breaker. The time had come at last; and the whip-line, with its appurtenances, was bent on to the shot-line, hauled aboard, and made fast by the tail of the

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block to the mainmast head. The wreck now slued around broadside to the sea and rolled frightfully. The hawser followed the whip-line on board, and the breeches-buoy was rigged on, but the vessel rolled so that it was impossible to set the hawser up on shore in the usual manner, so it was rove through the bull's-eye in the sand-anchor, while several men held on to the end to give and take with each roll of the vessel. The work of hauling the sailors from the wreck was now begun with electric energy. After two men were landed the vessel took the ground, but the circumstance increased rather than diminished her rolling, and some conception of this powerful motion may be derived from the fact that in one instance the breeches-buoy with a man in it swung, in the offshore roll, fully fifty feet in the air. The strain and friction upon the hawser were so great that the lignum-vitæ bull's-eye, through which it ran at the sand-anchor, despite the hardness of the wood, was worn fully half an inch deep during thirty minutes of use. Within those thirty minutes, however, the five men were safely landed, the last man getting out of the buoy at half past two.

The distance the life-saving crews followed the vessel with the loaded cart, not counting in their previous travel, appears to have been over three miles, and the time occupied was not less than six hours. When the various conditions of the enterprise are considered, it is nothing less than

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marvelous that the heroic courage and the lofty endurance of these men were not fruitless but resulted in a successful issue. The most experienced beachman upon that part of the coast, gray with assistance at scenes of disaster, and who was one of the six volunteers present, said, in this connection, that he never saw a time when the chances of rescue seemed so improbable. That those chances were outweighed, is due to the noble pulses that beat so strongly that wild February day in the generous blood of nineteen men, of whom their coast and their country have reason to be proud. No commentary can add to the plain record of what they did and suffered for the five men they saved.

The names of the six gallant volunteers who wrought in this rescue are William L. Chadwick, Isaac Osborn, David B. Fisher, David B. Clayton, Abner R. Clayton, and Abner Herbert. The crews were, respectively, Keeper Britton C. Miller, and Surfmen William H. Brower, Louis Truex, Abram J. Jones, Charles W. Flemming, and Demerest T. Herbert, of No. 11; and Keeper William P. Chadwick, and Surfmen Peter Sutfin, Benjamin Truex, Tyler C. Pearce, William Vannote, Charles Seaman, and John Flemming, of No. 12. The vessel was a total wreck.

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X

THE SCHOONER J. H. HARTZELL

THE wreck of the schooner J. H. Hartzell occurred about a mile south of the harbor of Frankfort, Lake Michigan, on the 16th of October, 1880. The scene on this occasion was in every respect extraordinary, and few narratives could surpass in interest the soberest recital of what took place that day abreast of and upon the wooded steeps in the neighborhood of one of our western towns.

The schooner belonged at Detroit, and left L'Anse, Lake Superior, on Monday, October 11, with a cargo of 495 tons of iron ore for the Frankfort Furnace Company. She was commanded by Captain William A. Jones. Her crew consisted of six men, named, respectively, John Cassidy (mate), Mark Mahan, William Hyde, Edward Biddlecome, Charles Coursie, and George Hyde. There was also on board a woman cook, named Lydia Dale, who had shipped at Buffalo, but is supposed to have belonged in Toledo, Ohio. The vessel made a good run, with favoring winds, and arrived off Frankfort about three o'clock on Saturday morning, October 16. Her captain concluded to wait until daylight before entering the harbor, and she

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lay off and on in the fresh southeast breeze until about six o'clock, when the wind suddenly shifted to the southwest, and began to blow a hard gale, with squalls of hail, snow, and rain. She was then rather close to the shore, and about two miles south of the piers. An attempt was at once made to wear ship, but, in the growing fury of the wind and sea, the vessel would not obey her helm, and began to drift in; seeing which, her master let go both anchors and set his signal of distress. She still continued to drag, and soon struck upon the middle bar, about 300 yards from shore. Directly abeam of her was a range of wooded sand-hills or bluffs, almost precipitous, and several hundred feet high, known as Big and Little Bald Hills. As soon as she struck, the captain slipped the anchors, and she swung around, bow to the shore. Hard aground, the seas at once crashed over her, and the awful staving and rending usual in such cases began. The yawl was carried away, the deck cabin wrenched asunder and scattered to the breakers, and the vessel began to founder. In a couple of hours all that remained for her crew was to take to the rigging. The cook, Lydia Dale, had been seriously ill. She was very weak, and it took the united efforts of four men to get her aloft into the cross-trees of the foremast, across which planks had been nailed. Upon this species of platform she lay, wrapped up as well as possible, with her head supported on the knees of one of the sailors, and, as

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they stated, rapidly grew delirious. A little while after the men had got aloft, the vessel sank in sixteen feet of water, the stern resting upon the bar and the forward part in deeper water. Later the mainmast gave way and went over, remaining attached to the foundered hulk by some of the cordage, and thrashing and plunging alongside with every rush of the seas. The foremast, with the men upon it, — one of them, the captain, clinging to the ratlines, about ten feet above the water, the remainder fifty feet aloft in the crosstrees, with the recumbent woman, — swayed and creaked ominously, some of the wedges having become loosened, and seemed likely to go over at any moment. It was a horrible feature of this shipwreck that the vessel, now an utter ruin, had a short time before been loitering to and fro in the fresh breeze, with no anticipation of disaster, waiting only for daylight to drop into her harbor, near at hand, so suddenly and fiercely had the tempest risen that within an hour destroyed her, and placed in deadly jeopardy the lives of the wretched company that clung to her one tottering spar.

The vessel was seen from the town shortly after she struck. One of the earliest to observe her was a little boy, the son of a fisherman named Joseph Robeior, who lived with his parents in a cabin on the hill near the south pier, and who, looking through the sheeting rain and hail, saw her plunging in the breakers. The lad at once told his father,

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who ran without delay to the village of South Frankfort with the alarm, and, accompanied by some fifteen or twenty citizens, cut across the hills and got abreast of the wreck near eight o'clock. Other persons continued to arrive, and at length the crowd built a fire and laid pieces of driftwood along so as to form in huge rude letters, black against the white ground of the bluff, the words "LIFE-BOAT COMING." Eager signals from the sailors announced that they could read this gigantic telegram. Meanwhile, a gallant young citizen named Woodward had started on horseback for the nearest life-saving station (No. 4, Eleventh District), at Point au Bec Scies, ten miles distant, by a sandy and hilly road, mostly lying through woods. The young man galloped furiously through the tempest, which was constantly increasing in violence, tearing along the difficult highway to such good purpose that by half past eight o'clock he dashed up to the station with the news of the wreck. The keeper, Captain Thomas E. Mathews, at once ordered out the mortar cart and beach apparatus. In a few minutes, the cart loaded with the Lyle gun, the breeches-buoy, hawser and hauling-lines, and other appurtenances, left the station, dragged by the horse, which young Woodward hitched on, the hauling being also aided by himself and the station-men, Marvin La Cour, J. W. Stokes, Martin L. Barney, Leonard Rohr, and J. Manuel. One of the surfmen, Charles La Rue, was away on the south patrol when the

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start was made, and followed his comrades to the scene of the wreck subsequently.

The expedition had set out upon a terrible journey. The Point au Bec Scies station is upon the lake shore, north of Frankfort, south of which town the wreck lay, and the intervening river and the harbor piers making out into the lake from the town made it impossible, in any case, to arrive at the wreck by following the line of the coast. The only way was to make a circuit through the woods and around the rear of the town, where the bisecting river could be crossed by a bridge in that locality, and the beach south of Frankfort gained. The shortest route, not less than seven or eight miles long, was by a road which led off the beach to an intersecting road leading to the town; but to gain this it was necessary to travel two miles from Point au Bec Scies along the beach, and the beach was now submerged by a swashing flood constantly bursting against and washing away the steep banks of the lake shore, battering the escarpment with intertangled masses of logs, stumps, and trees, and of course rendering the way impassable. The expedition was therefore compelled to lengthen the détour by taking an old trail or cart-track, which had been pioneered by the Point au Bec Scies lighthouse construction party several years before for the transportation of materials. This road wandered through the woods, along winding ravines and up steep, soggy sand-hills. Across these acclivities

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the way was so difficult that the men and the horse, tugging and straining at the cart together, could only make ten or fifteen yards at a pull without pausing. This violent toil was pursued amidst the roaring of the gale, which now blew almost a hurricane, and the rushing of the storm, until about a mile's distance from the station had been accomplished. By this time the men, despite the bitter cold, were hot and wet with their efforts, and the horse, steaming with exertion, trembled on his limbs and could scarcely draw. There were at least nine miles more of their disheartening journey before them, and the party were already sorely spent. The difficulties of an ordinary country road, in the rougher regions of the west, are quite indescribable, and thus far the way was not even a road, but a rude cart-trail, made years before, already half choked with a dense undergrowth, and cumbered here and there with fallen trunks of trees. The load which the horse and men had to drag through its rugged and mushy ruts weighed not less than a thousand pounds, and it is needless to say that the labors of hauling this burden were not lightened by the frightful blasts which fitfully burst through the pines upon the gang as they strained and bent at their toil, nor by the incessant pelting of the driven hail and rain, which lashed and stung their faces.

Fortunately some relief was at hand. The state road had been gained, and a light buggy came hurrying along with Mr. Rennie Averill, who, at the

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solicitation of Mr. Burmeister, the marine correspondent of the Chicago "Inter-Ocean," had nobly undertaken the task, from which several persons had recoiled on account of the severity of the storm and the dreadful condition of the roads, of bearing the wreck alarm to the station, not knowing that this had already been done by Mr. Woodward. With the aim of getting help for the hauling, the keeper jumped into the buggy and rode on with Mr. Averill, ahead of the crew. Before long, they met another brave citizen, named Samuel Benton, who was also hastening to the station with a double team to give the alarm. He reported another team behind him, on the road, and at Captain Mathews's request, which showed wise forethought, he pushed on to the station to bring up the life-car and Merriman suit, taking with him, by the keeper's order, Surfman La Cour, as he passed the cart on the way. The keeper also requested Mr. Benton to bring back Surfman La Rue, whom he judged to have reached the station by this time from his patrol. It is noticeable, and it is due to Captain Mathews to say, that his conduct of operations, from the beginning to the end of this laborious and difficult enterprise, was in the highest degree praiseworthy, no step being omitted or forgotten which could facilitate the rescue.

The life-saving crew had got on with their load some half a mile farther, when they were met by another citizen with a team of stout horses, sent

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on by the keeper to aid the hauling. A more rapid progress was now assured. The state road upon which they were traveling was a great improvement on the trail they had left, although fearfully rough. It lay for four or five miles straight to Frankfort through dense timber, broken as it neared that place by an occasional farm clearing. The lower part of the town traversed, the road continued along the inner basin which forms the harbor, leading to a bridge spanning the river which feeds this place of anchorage. The bridge crossed, the track went on for some miles farther through a dense growth of woods to the neighborhood of the wreck. Nearly the whole way was a series of steep up-grades, plentifully strown with pitch holes. Along such a course the expedition valiantly struggled, arrived at and rushed through Frankfort, emerged again upon the rugged country road, crossed the river, plunged into the woods, and finally, about half past ten o'clock, reached the rear base of the bastion of high hills which separated them from the lake where the wreck lay. The ardor of the rushing march of this train of men and horses is shown by the fact that they conquered the rough stretch of ten miles in about two hours.

The keeper had driven on to an elevated farm, known as Greenwood's, from whence he could overlook the lake, and saw, about a quarter of a mile to the north, the wreck with the stormy water flying over her. He was returning toward the cart of

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apparatus, with the idea that the road to Greenwood's must be taken, when a citizen named Miller, mounted on horseback, rode up to him, crying out, "Follow me and I 'll show you a short cut." The party followed him through a ravine about a quarter of a mile. The way then led up the overhanging hillside through the brush, and the tug with the loaded cart was terrible. So steep was the ascent that man and beast had fairly to climb, and almost to hoist the cart after them. Nothing could have been done but for the aid of a crowd of sturdy townsfolk, who had assembled there, and, anticipating the arrival of the life-saving party, had cleared away with axes and handspikes a great deal of the undergrowth and fallen trees. Even with these impediments removed, so precipitous was the acclivity, that it took the united efforts of twenty-seven brawny men, by actual count, and a span of stout horses, to gain the summit, only about twenty feet being made at a time. By these efforts, worthy of giants, the top of the hill was reached; but the crowd were now brought up all standing by a belt of woods, as yet unpierced, which bristled along the crest of the eminence, and in which lay fallen trees half buried in brush and dense undergrowth. The obstacle seemed to inspire all present with a sudden electric energy, and gave occasion for a striking and admirable scene. In an instant, and as by a simultaneous impulse, all hands, citizens and crew, flung themselves upon the wood

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with axes and handspikes, and a work began which resembled a combat. The hilltop resounded with the blows of the implements, the heavy thuds of fallen timber lifted and flung aside, and the shouts of the brigade of pioneers mingled with the howling of the wind and the hissing of the descending hail and rain. The wood seemed tumbling asunder, and its rapidly opening depths were alive with rude figures in every variety of fiery action. In some places men were showering terrible blows with axes upon standing timber. In others they were prying and lifting aside great fallen trees with all their branches, shouting in chorus. Groups here and there, with frantic activity, were uprooting and rending away masses of brush and undergrowth. Sometimes ten men would fling themselves in a mass upon a young tree or a sapling, pull it down, and tear it away in an instant. In an incredibly short space of time the way through the wood was cleared, and the mortar cart loaded with apparatus was dragged forward to the brow of the hill.

The gap cloven by this heroic onset disclosed a strange and dreadful diorama. The concourse of life-savers, fifty or sixty in number, were upon the summit of a precipitous bluff nearly three hundred feet above the sea. This bluff was composed of sand, covered near the top with a yellow sandy loam, with here and there a patch of clay upon its slanted surface. The mass not being compact, owing to the nature of its substance, yielded readily

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to any force brought to bear upon it, and the gale, which was now blowing with fury, beating upon the acclivity like a simoom, flung up the sand for ten or twelve feet high upon the face of the slope, so that, to the gazer looking down, the whole surface appeared in rapid and violent motion. Above the dusky layer of this sand-storm was an air thick and blurred with the snow and rain, and the crowd looking through, saw far below, looming with a sort of misty distinctness from the terrific confusion of the waters, the nearly sunken wreck, its two masts still standing, resembling grotesque disheveled steeples made up of spar and cordage. This object had the effect of rendering all things subsidiary to itself, — the immensity of livid and lowering atmosphere in which it was central, — the ragged undulations of surf, bursting into foam, which flung themselves around it with furious celerity, and seemed racing toward it from the farthest sea. The hull was well smothered up in the breakers, but at intervals between seas it appeared for a moment black and streaming as the surf on the bar fell away. Standing in the spreading ladders of the lower rigging, a few feet above the water, was a diminished figure with upturned face, watching the people on the summit of the bluff. This was the captain. The monstrous waves curled and broke below his feet, and covered him with their spray. Forty feet above him could be seen, lessened by distance, a huddle of faces, peering at the crowd on shore

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from the swaying crosstrees. These were the faces of the crew. The foretopmast rose above them, and the gaff-topsail, partially unfurled, bulged and flapped over them in the tempest. This frightful spectacle, seen by the crowd on the heights through the weird curtain of the tempest, amidst the uproar of the wind and sea, had something of the vivid unreality of the scenery of a vision.

What the crowd could not see, owing to the distance, was fraught with deeper elements of pity and terror. The captain of the vessel, who had but recently recovered from a fever, stood covered with frozen snow and rain in the ratlines, stiffened and discolored with exposure to the storm. High above him, on their giddy and unstable perch, the six men crouched, blue in the face with cold. The fury of the wind in this tottering eyrie was such, that when one of the group had occasion to communicate with another, he could do so only by shouting through hollowed hands into his ear. Amidst all the din of gale and sea, the unhappy men could hear the harsh creaking of the mast as the vessel swayed to and fro. They expected every moment to go over. The poor woman lay among them in the narrow space the elevation afforded, her lower limbs, swathed in a weft of canvas which one of the men, Edward Biddlecomb, had cut out of the gaff-topsail above and roped around them, hanging down through the orifice in the deck of the crosstrees, and her head on the knees of the

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sailor William Hyde, who kept her face covered from the storm. She had become very cold and numb, and from time to time the men nearest her chafed her hands and arms in the effort to revive her. She gave no heed to these attentions. The delirium, which the sailors aver in their testimony marked her first hours aloft, had, as they state, yielded to unconsciousness.

No time was lost by the life-saving crew and citizens in commencing operations for the rescue. The prospect was discouraging in almost the last degree. It was a long distance from the summit of the hill to the wreck, and the slope of the sandy hillside, as has been said, was almost a precipice. Anxiously surveying the ground, Captain Mathews descried, about 250 feet beneath him, a narrow ledge or plateau, some ten or twelve feet wide, and at once determined that the cart must be lowered to this foothold as the place of operation. A portion of the whip-line was unwound from the reel and fastened to the body of the loaded vehicle as a drag-rope, the other end being taken to a fallen tree as a loggerhead or snubbing-post. Surfmen Barney and Stokes and citizen Woodward placed themselves in the shafts to guide the cart; the rest of the crew and citizens seized the rope to lower away, and the perilous descent of the nearly perpendicular bluff was begun. At every step the yellow slope gave way in masses, instantly caught up in the whirl of the blasts that burst incessantly

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upon the acclivity. The descent continued steadily, without accident, to a point when it was found that the line employed was too short to enable the cart to gain the plateau. An audacious expedient was at once entered upon. The line was cast off from the fallen tree, and held by the crowd, each man sitting and laying back with his feet braced in the sand, and acting as a drag upon the burden. In this way the men slid down the bluff behind the cart-load, plowing and tearing their way amidst an augmented storm of sand and dirt; some of them being jerked down the bank head-foremost, but most of them maintaining their position. In a few minutes, panting and sweating with their effort, and looking like the dirtiest of brickmakers, they stood around the cart on the narrow ledge, the tremendous surf, thick with flood-wood, bursting in foam and spray a few feet below them.

The cart was at once unloaded, the lines made ready, and the Lyle gun planted and fired. It was then a little before eleven o'clock. The charge was seven ounces, and at the first fire the shot, directed with great judgment on the part of the keeper, flew almost directly across the wind about two hundred yards beyond the vessel, carrying the line along her starboard broadside as she lay nearly head on to the shore, and letting it fall right upon her weather rigging, fore and aft, where it was instantly caught by the captain. Unfortunately, the slack of the line was immediately swept by the

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wind and current under the head-gear of the wreck, where it fouled and could not be cleared by the people on board. The first effort to establish line communication with the wreck therefore proved a failure, and the shot-line was hauled in and faked for another trial. This time, with the view of overcoming the added weight of the line, which was wet and clogged with sand, the keeper used an eight-ounce charge. He also trained the gun a little nearer the vessel, aiming to make the line fall higher against the rigging and to prevent, if possible, its fouling with the wreckage. His calculations were superbly accurate. Before the echoes of the report of the gun had ceased along the bluff, the line, flying aloft its full length, had fallen directly across the fore-rigging, where it was caught by the men in the crosstrees.

It wanted at this time a few minutes of noon, and the shipwrecked sailors were in possession of a line from the shore. The anxious question now was, whether this line would stand the strain of hauling out the double rope, or whip, running through a tail-block, which was at once bent on to it. As allowance had to be made for the slack caused by the distance and the tremendous current, there was a vast length of this double line to be paid out between ship and shore. It was manned by at least fifty men, who strung themselves along up the face of the bluff with the aim of keeping the line as much as possible out of the sea, where

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it was endangered by the drift stuff and wreckage. At times the force of the current would carry both parts of the whip far to leeward, and the sailors would fail to haul in an inch, and could only take a turn with the shot-line around the heel of the foretopmast. Then the men upon the slope of the bluff would raise and straighten out the whip as much as possible, and at a signal from the keeper below, suddenly slack, giving the sailors in the crosstrees, working in concert with them, a chance to haul in a few feet at a time. These manœuvres were regulated by the keeper solely in pantomime, for such was the uproar of the gale that his voice could not have been heard beyond the distance of a few feet, even through a speaking-trumpet. The strain on the slender shot-line increased as it took out more and more of the whip-line, and every moment the toilers on the slant of the acclivity, timing their labor to the gestures of the grimy figure below them, felt, with him, the dread that the strands would part; but the tough braided linen held, and, after more than two hours of such exertions as make the muscles tremble, they had the satisfaction of seeing the whip arrive, and the tail-block properly fastened around the lower masthead and heel of the topmast, the block hanging forward of the crosstrees.

A new obstacle, involving a terrible discouragement, had gradually been developed as the farther end of the whip-line rose from the water up the

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mast. The whole length of this double rope, hanging between the tail-block at the masthead and the shore, was seen to be twisted, one part over the other, and full of turns. Every effort had been made to prevent this result; the files of men that paid out the rope had been kept widely apart, with members of the life-saving crew judiciously stationed at certain points among them; and two experienced surfmen had tended the reel on the cart which gave off the whip to the sea. But the trouble had commenced when the rope first struck the water. The tail-block then immediately began to spin, showing that the rope, dragged upon by the current, and unequally soaked by the sea, was curling and twisting as it ran. Presently a large tree, with all its branches, lying in the wash of the surf, had fouled with the whip, increasing the difficulty, and the line was released only by the keeper and several of the crowd rushing down the bank and jumping into the frothing surf, waist-deep, to clear it. Besides, in assisting the sailors to overcome the current by hauling in the slack, and then rapidly paying out, the tangle had been constantly increased, the sea taking advantage of each delivery to roll and twist the line before it could be tautened. It now stretched in this condition, in a sagging double, between the unsteady mast and the hands of the files of men along the storm-blown surface of the bluff.

The ardent throng of citizen co-workers with

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the life-saving crew were reasonably enough struck with consternation at this incident. A volley of excited questions began to shower upon the keeper in regard to what he was going to do to save the men. Every other second anxious interrogations or expressions of dejection or despair were shouted at him through the uproar of the storm, and for a few minutes his position was exceedingly trying. The crowd, however, were good-natured and obedient in the highest degree, and presently every man rushed to his place under the keeper's orders, and all fell to work clearing the line. This was done by fastening one end to a tree on the brow of the hill and hauling it taut, then untwisting or dipping the other part around it, tautening up both parts from time to time while maintaining the operation. Finally, after fully an hour's work the last of the turns were out, and the line was clear.

The breeches-buoy was at once rigged on. As the slope was constantly giving way, several small land-slides, half burying the men below, having already occurred, no sand-anchor was planted, the keeper relying on the force he had under command to hold and handle the line. Surfman La Cour was stationed at the summit to tend the slack, which he did by taking a turn with the line around a fallen tree. The buoy then went out toward the wreck, urged by the eager arms of the haulers.

As the men who worked the line were compelled by the steepness of the bank to stand in constrained

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positions, half upright, half reclining, upon ground constantly giving way, and were also greatly hindered by the blinding sand and buffeting wind, the outward progress of the buoy was slow, but at length it arrived at the mast. After some little delay, as though the people in the crosstrees hesitated, a man was seen through the dim atmosphere to get into the buoy, which was at once hauled back to the shore. The hauling was done under such difficulties that the passage of the buoy to the shore occupied seventeen minutes by the watch of one of the bystanders. As it approached, several persons rushed down the bank into the surf, and the man was pulled out and helped up to the little plateau. It was the first mate, John Cassidy. His jaws were set, his eyes vacantly fixed, and the expression of his face dazed and frightened. A citizen, Mr. Burmeister, gave him a draught of brandy. This seemed to revive him, and presently he said, "Save the others." Two or three questions were asked him in regard to the vessel and the persons on board, which he answered faintly, and he was then led away towards the town, supported on either side by two citizens.

In reply to one interrogation, he had been understood by the keeper to say that the woman in the crosstrees did not want to come ashore in the buoy, and as he left, the keeper was notified by Surfman La Cour that the tree to which the whip-line was secured was slowly giving way, and the bank

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coming down under the strain. This circumstance, and the mate's declaration, decided the keeper to substitute the life-car for the buoy, partly because the car could be towed out like a boat until it reached the mast, thus relieving the latter of a certain amount of tension upon it, while its use also dispensed with the fallen tree and spared the pull upon the bank; partly, also, because its employment might facilitate the rescue by landing a greater number of the shipwrecked at each trip. The car was accordingly ordered forward, and the keeper, with his own hands, attached it to the lines.

Every face blazed with excitement as the hauling began. The life-car, as soon as it entered the surf, was dashed about like a cockle-shell. In the second line of breakers, owing to the men not paying out rapidly enough to allow it to tail to the current, it was suddenly tossed bottom up, but righted again immediately, and continued violently lurching on its way. Gradually it grew steadier as it got farther from the shore. After protracted effort on the part of the haulers, it had at length reached the wreck, when, all at once, the jagged mainmast, which had fallen some time before, and was swinging alongside with other wreckage, rose on the summit of a huge breaker, and, lunging like a battering-ram, struck the car such a blow that it tossed it spinning twelve or fifteen feet into the air. Although every one's heart leaped into his mouth, the life-savers took swift advantage of the momentary lightening

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of the line to haul in the slack, and rouse the car up, where it hung almost perpendicularly some twelve feet below the masthead. Without the least delay, two of the men, William Hyde and Edward Biddlecomb, were successively lowered from the crosstrees by ropes around their bodies, and got in. A third man was lowered in the same way, who secured the door, and was then hauled back again by his companions. All hands on the hillside then fell to work, and the car approached the shore. As it drew near, floundering in the surf, the keeper and several men rushed down waist-deep into the foaming flood, seized and dragged in the car, unclasped the door, and liberated the two sailors. Mr. Burmeister at once gave them brandy from his flask. They were then helped up the bank; and as the crowd, in their eagerness to assist, gathered rather too thickly for a soil which seemed to vie with the sea in instability, the bank suddenly gave way, and the whole mass were within a hair's-breadth of being precipitated into the tumbling sea below them. They were clutched and pulled out by those above them, and after a violent scramble along the steeps succeeded in gaining a narrow strip of level ground to the northward. Upon being interrogated about the woman, the two men appear to have given evasive answers, to the general effect that she would come ashore in the next trip of the car. They were led away by Mr. Burmeister to a team near by, which conveyed

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them to the place of shelter and succor they sorely needed.

The life-car had received some damage around the hatchway and cover from the blow of the mast and the battering wreckage. It was speedily hammered into shape and again sent out on the lines. The haulers had learned by their first experience how to handle the ropes, and the car pursued its course through the broken water without capsizing. From time to time during the strenuous hauling bursts of sand on the slope indicated the moments when the ground gave way under the feet of the files of devoted men toiling in the heart of the gale, and who could be seen on these occasions to slide and stagger as they pulled, struggling to preserve their foothold or escape engulfment. The tempest continued to scourge the escarpment with unabated violence, and the air of the waning afternoon was thicker than ever with the wind-blown rain, snow, and hail, driven in alternate gusts, and interblent with the driving substance of the hills. Amidst this continued fury the car slowly worked on toward the wreck.

The captain of the sunken vessel meanwhile painfully crept up from his place in the lower rigging toward the men above. He was so exhausted by long standing and exposure that he was unable to climb over the futtock-shrouds on to the cross-trees, and was prevented from ascending through the orifice which had been left in the platform, as

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the lower limbs of the woman, swathed in their wrappage of canvas, hung through the opening. By the efforts of the sailors, aided by his own, the inert body was drawn away and lashed by the bent knees to the Jacob's ladder. The captain then mounted through the opening, and endeavored, as he testifies, to rouse the woman into some signs of life. The life-car soon hung again in mid-air below them, and the second mate and captain clambered slowly down and got in. In the beginning of the creeping darkness the car arrived from the sea, and was torn open by a dozen eager hands. The crowd were confident that the woman would be brought this time, and were stupefied when only the two men appeared. There was an instant burst of fierce interrogations, to which the captain and mate appear, like their predecessors, to have rendered equivocal answers. The effect of their replies was that the woman was the same as dead, and that she would be, or might be, brought to shore at the next trip. These rejoinders were received with sullen looks and angry murmurs from the crowd. There was no time, however, for parley, as approaching night was fast darkening the storm, and the two men were led to a team near by, which drove away with them, while the battered life-car was hastily repaired, and once more hauled out upon its way.

The first breaker flung the car upside down, and it remained so the entire trip. It was nearly dark

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by the time it arose again from the sea to the neighborhood of the crosstrees, and the anxieties of the keeper became intense lest some shocking accident should mar the closing act of rescue. He could only barely see that the car had reached the proper place. The glasses merely enabled him to discern shadowy objects moving about the masthead, and he vainly endeavored to determine whether the two sailors were engaged in lowering the woman from the crosstrees. To give them every opportunity to save her, he kept the car a long time out, fearful all the time that the crowd, from which every now and then burst expressions of impatience, might suddenly become uncontrollable, and madly haul away, possibly at the very moment when the sailors were descending with their burden through mid-air. An admirable instinct of obedience, however, from first to last pervaded these volunteers, and they remained under command. Finally it grew so dark that the car became utterly invisible, and the keeper at length gave the signal to haul. A frenzy of activity at once fell upon the hillside. The common consciousness that the woman was at last coming in the car with the remainder of the men on the wreck, and that the tremendous hardship and effort of many hours were about to bear full fruit, gave a furious alertness to the cordons of obscure figures on the ghostly front of the bluff, and the rope of the life-car slid swiftly through the dark-

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ness. The night had fairly set in on this sustained labor, when the life-car was seen emerging from the gloom over the riot of the breakers. It had made the trip bottom-up, and presently grounded in this position on the edge of the shore. The voice of the keeper at once rang out to those around him. "Now, boys," he cried, "jump down and roll that car over and get that woman out as soon as you can." A dozen men rushed down the slope, waist-deep into the surf, and lugged the car up out of the swash and flood-wood. In a moment the car was rolled over, and the hatch snatched off. A man instantly sprang out quite nimbly. It was the sailor, George Hyde. Another figure, stiff and halting, rose in the opening, and was helped from the car. This was the other sailor, Charles Coursie. A cry of many voices then rose, "Where 's the woman?" It was followed by a momentary silence, in which men were seen bent over the open hatch and groping about with their arms inside the car. Then some one shouted to the crowd in a terrible voice, "They have n't brought the woman!" The announcement was received with a savage burst of imprecations. The dark air resounded with a roar of curses, and amidst the din men were heard yelling that they never would have laid hands to the hauling-lines if they had known that the woman was to be left upon the wreck to perish. Amidst the tumult, the keeper took aside the sailor, George Hyde, and demanded,

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looking him right in the eyes, "Why did n't you bring that woman?" Hyde faced him, and replied, "The woman is dead." "Be careful, now," retorted the keeper, "if you don't know for certain that she 's dead, say so; and if you do know, say so." "The woman is dead, and stiff as a board," returned the sailor, adding, "She 's been dead for some time." The keeper then wheeled about to the sailor Coursie, and sternly demanded, "Is that woman dead?" Coursie replied, "Oh, yes; she 's been dead quite awhile."

It is probable that the feeling that the sailors spoke the truth — at all events, that the doubt as to what the truth was, mixed in either case with the horrible sense of irremediable tragedy — had its influence upon the generous men who had toiled so long at the wreck, and gradually stilled them. What is known is, that their rough fury soon settled into sullen quietude. It is, and doubtless will always be, an open question in what condition the hapless woman was left upon the mast. Whether alive or dead, her desertion caused great excitement at Frankfort for some time afterward, and it is certain that on this topic opinion was considerably divided. No common conclusion appears to have been reached, nor is it likely that such unanimity would be possible from the evidence. A coroner's inquest held upon her body, which was washed ashore seventeen days afterward, found that she came to her death by drown-

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ing, leaving it to be inferred that she was left upon the wreck alive, and perished upon the subsequent fall of the mast into the sea. None of the sailors appear to have been present at this inquest, they having all left the neighborhood soon after the disaster; and the strongest evidence against them seems to have been the depositions of certain witnesses as to admissions made by two or three of their number.

On the other hand, the concurrent testimony of the last four men upon the wreck, given in the form of affidavits immediately after the occurrence, is, that the woman was, at the time of their departure, quite dead. If this statement can be accepted, it is not without support from some antecedent circumstances. It does not seem to be questioned that she had soon become unconscious after her removal to the staging of the crosstrees, and was in a failing condition for hours before the last man was brought ashore. Her death, therefore, from previous illness and current exhaustion, is not unlikely, and if dead, the men perched aloft with her upon a mast rocking in its step, and every moment likely to fall, must have felt it useless, as it would have been physically impossible, to have lowered the heavy and inert burden of her corpse twelve feet down into the car, and felt also that their every exertion was justly due to their own preservation. Another possibility is, that when they left she was not dead, but insensible or in a

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dying condition, and that they felt that her insensibility would make it impossible to save her. In this case their failure to make the effort would hardly be less than criminal. Its only extenuation would be the consideration of the terrible and perhaps insurmountable difficulties of the task. She was a heavy woman, and lay, an utter weight, powerless to help herself, on the narrow ledge of the crosstree planking, sixty feet above the rush of waters. It will be remembered that the sailors had to descend from this shaken perch, a distance of about twelve feet, to gain the life-car, each man partly availing himself of the broken shrouds which flapped around the mast, and partly lowered from above by a rope in the hands of his comrades. It was like the descent of a spider who hangs in mid-air by a thread while he catches at filaments of his broken web to guide his way downward. To each man, a certain and considerable amount of self-help, in such a descent, was possible, but far otherwise in the case of an inert mass, lowered from a swaying spar, toward the mouth of a life-car swinging at random, almost perpendicular, and well-nigh inaccessible. At all events, it remains, and will doubtless always remain, a mystery, whether, as the coroner's jury substantially found, the poor woman was needlessly sacrificed; whether she was abandoned in her insensibility because her companions felt the impossibility of lowering her to the car; or whether

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she was left behind because she was dead, and could not therefore be saved.

The keeper stood for a few minutes gazing into the stormy darkness and debating with himself whether anything could be done for the recovery of the body. Had there been daylight left, he would have called for volunteers to go out to the wreck in the life-car and make the effort. But he realized that he would have no control of the movements of his volunteers after they left the shore. He would not be able to guard the car from the wreckage alongside the sunken hull, nor know when it had reached the masthead. He would not know when to lower it for the return trip; he might let it down while the hatch was still open, and spill his men into the sea, or he might haul home and leave one of the number on the cross-trees. More than all, as the rickety mast might fall at any moment, he would be guilty of risking the destruction of the bold men who undertook the enterprise. The only course left open to him was to suspend operations and endeavor to get the body in the morning, if the mast was left standing, and this he resolved to do.

In a few minutes the whip was unreeved, the apparatus secured high up on the bank, and the sullen crowd, bitterly disappointed at the loss of the woman, though they had saved the seven men, dispersed and straggled away to the town. They had eaten nothing all day, and were much

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spent by their exertions. The life-saving crew were too exhausted to attempt to return to their station that night, and scattered around at different houses, with instructions to reassemble at the scene of the wreck early in the morning. Surfman La Cour, who had fared rather harder than the others, having been in charge of the landing of the car, and been repeatedly thrown down in the surf, was compelled to halt on the way to town, and spend the night at a house near the beach. Before long the vague slopes, beaten by the tempest, were left in utter solitude, and nothing that was human remained upon the scene except the body of the woman, lashed to the rude trestles on the mast, out in the sightless darkness.

In the night the mast fell. The keeper, up at four o'clock in the morning, found that it was gone. Visiting the wreck as soon afterward as possible, he recovered his shot and shot-line from the fallen spar which was there, but found the crosstrees vacant. Seventeen days later, however, as has been stated, the body of the woman was discovered on the beach near Frankfort, where it had drifted ashore.

The purpose of this narrative is to relate the circumstances under which a human life was lost; but although this occurrence was singularly ghastly and mournful, it is necessarily reduced to a secondary place in the recital by the noble char-

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acter of the exploit of rescue which accompanied it. It will at once be remarked that this rescue was largely accomplished by the aid of people from the town, and it is regretted that their names cannot be given, a complete list being wanting, for never was the public recognition due to service in a humane cause more justly deserved than in this instance. The conduct of the life-saving crew in toiling to the wreck from such a distance, and despite the formidable obstacles interposed by the wild country and the October gale, is admirable; and also all they did and endured when once abreast of the sunken vessel. It might be said, however, that they acted under the obligations of official duty. But no abatement can be made in the tribute which belongs to the throng of great-hearted volunteers, who served with them so stanchly. Without any compulsion or requirement, other than their own manly hearts supplied, they were there with the men of the station from first to last. Hour after hour, patiently, sternly, they stood braced on the slanted front of a crumbling precipice, without food, without rest, beaten by wind and rain and hail, mired by the muck of the hills, choked and blinded by the sand blasts, often half engulfed by the sliding soil, strained and aching in every muscle and sinew by the very act of standing on the steep and yielding acclivity, and by the racking pulling and hauling upon the ropes of the life-car, and

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never turned their faces from the work until the last being whom it was possible to save from the wreck was in safety among them. More even, however, than their bravery and endurance was the splendid discipline they imposed upon themselves through all the trying hours of the labor. They were a miscellaneous throng, — blown together, one might say, by the winds, — fifty or sixty farmers, lake sailors, lumbermen, roustabouts, plain townsfolk of several varieties; and bound by no engagement, and without even a moment's conference, they massed themselves as one man under the orders of the keeper, and obeyed him with the subordination and steady constancy of trained soldiers. Before such behavior the language of commendation fails.

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XI

THE SCHOONER GRANADA

On October 17, the day following the disaster to the J. H. Hartzell, the same storm wrecked the schooner Granada near Muskegon, Lake Michigan, about a hundred miles below Frankfort. The schooner belonged to Grand Haven, Mich., and was bound from Muskegon to Chicago with a cargo of lumber. Her captain was Robert Linklater, and she had a crew of six men. She had proceeded on her voyage some forty miles, when, at about six o'clock in the morning of October 16, she was struck by the sudden gale which arose on that coast and instantly capsized. In this overturn, her deck-load, the cabin and steering-wheel, and the mainmast all went by the board. Soon afterward she righted, but in a leaky and water-logged condition; and as she lurched and rolled about heavily, a helpless hulk, in the tremendous sea, the wedges worked out of the partners, and the foremast began to sway from side to side, soon carrying away the foretopmast. She continued to drift to the north and east all that day, the night following, and the day after, until about three o'clock in the afternoon (Sunday, October 17) she

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struck on the outer bar, about a mile and a half north of the piers at Muskegon. The gale, meanwhile, blew without intermission, with heavy, blinding squalls of snow. The air was bitterly cold, and there was a prodigious sea.

The schooner was descried about noon of the 17th, some four miles southwest of the Muskegon piers, by Keeper William Groh, of Life-Boat Station No. 8, Eleventh District. All he could see of her at that distance, even by the aid of his marine glass, was a mast sticking up from the tumbling waters of the lake, and a split gaff-topsail flapping in the gale. At times, a little of her hull was visible as she lifted on the great swells. She appeared to be drifting with a strong current, setting to the north, and gradually approaching the shore. She at length passed the entrance to the harbor, still well out to sea, and Keeper Groh saw that her foremast was loose in the step, by the way it jerked from side to side as she rolled. A number of people had congregated to watch her, among whom were several captains of tugs; and the keeper, knowing that she would soon strike the beach near by, and the difficulty, if not impossibility, of getting to her in a sea so monstrous, offered the tug-men fifty dollars out of his own pocket to tow him clear of the piers in the life-boat. The offer was declined, on the ground that the task would involve the destruction of both tug and life-boat in such a stress of tempest. In

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fact, the existing conditions justified this conclusion of the tug captains. The gale, which had been blowing long from the southwest, had canted to west-northwest, and blew with a registered velocity of forty-six miles an hour, making a terrific cross-sea; and as at Muskegon the south pier is much longer than the other, the north side of both of these projections was swept by the breakers, which directly beat upon them, and the greater part of both piers was constantly smothered in raging water, through which no tug could expect to pass with safety. Besides, near the entrance was a bar, from which, with every subsidence of the surf, the water fell away so sheerly that a tug endeavoring to make its way over would be sure to strike the bottom.

Seeing that the means necessary to get the life-boat out to the wreck before she drifted into the breakers could not be procured, Keeper Groh hastened to the station, and ordered the crew to track the vessel along the beach with the mortar apparatus until she struck. He had formed the conclusion that it would be impossible to propel the life-boat from shore by any force of oars, and it was plainly impossible to get out under sail. His idea, therefore, in taking the apparatus, was to rescue the sailors by the breeches-buoy if practicable; and if not, to have the line shot over the vessel used to haul out the surf-boat under her lee.

It was about three o'clock in the afternoon when

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the crew got away from the station with the mortar cart to follow the vessel up the shore. After a toilsome haul over a bad road along the sand-hills, the beach was struck, abreast of which the wreck was drifting. A crowd of sailors and mill-men, about two hundred in number, had collected, and the keeper, when half a mile or more north of the piers, dispatched about fifty of them to the station, in charge of two of his crew, to bring the surf-boat. There is hardly a point along the eastern shore of Lake Michigan, and the same is true of many places upon the shores of the other lakes, where the bristling strew of logs, trees, and wreck débris of all kinds thrown up by the surf upon the beach, is not an ugly factor in the difficult problem of rescuing the shipwrecked. On this occasion the beach was lined for miles north of the piers with this formidable refuse, over which the boat wagon was jolted so furiously by the party sent to bring it, that it came up to the cart with its bed-pieces split and shattered, the force of men on the drag-ropes, numerous enough for almost any burden, having found it easier, in their exultant vigor, to stave along over everything than to make a safer road for the wagon by clearing away the heavy flood-wood. Fortunately, the boat was not injured, and immediately upon its arrival the keeper dismounted it and got it ready for possible use, the gun being already placed for firing.

It was then about five o'clock, and as these

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preparations implied, the moment of crisis had arrived. After her long drifting, the vessel had come to land, and a wild scene followed. She struck upon the outer bar, about 300 yards from shore, in some sixteen feet of water. Seen across the crashing confusion of the breakers, through the snow squalls, she appeared in a slightly oblique position, nearly head on to the shore, poised on an even keel, with the sea flying over her. Only her foremast and bowsprit were left standing. Something of her port-rail showed three or four feet above the sea. Her hull was sunken so deeply that her bare deck, swept every other moment by the waves, was low down near the water. Two of the sailors were lying aft upon the deck, dead from their long exposure of over thirty hours. Four of the remaining five stood huddled in a group clinging to the wreck on the port-quarter, while the other one was forward. The crowd of men upon the beach, greatly excited at this spectacle, were rushing about in the violent wind, many of them vociferating to the keeper to launch the surf-boat, and others cursing and swearing at his refusal, he being bent upon trying to fire a line across the wreck, in accordance with his original plan. The stormy colloquy was cut short by the report of the gun, and the line was seen to rush aloft and fall near the wreck — so near, indeed, that the men on board tried to catch it, but failed, and the line fell into the sea. Just as the gun was

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fired, the foremast toppled over with a crash, carrying away with it the bowsprit also. The miserable vessel — rotten as a pumpkin, in the graphic phrase of one of the witnesses, so unseaworthy that even her masts were rotten, as the investigating officer found — at once began to break up. Her whole starboard bow fell off; she split open, and her cargo of deals gushed out, in rafts and bunches, says a witness, and from that time until dark came from her in a steady stream to the shore. The gazers could see the surf rear up alongside the vessel, throwing the lumber high into the air; the clumps changing ends, and fantastically tumbling in all sorts of ways, and the whole sea seeming full of them.

Although the falling of the mast and bowsprit left nothing higher than the men to catch the line, Keeper Groh was so sure of the necessity of its use that he at once hauled it in, faked it down upon the beach, and fired it again. It fell on board forward, but the sea sheeted across the vessel and swept it away. A third time the line was fired, but the shot passed over the wreck amidships, and the line drifted clear over the wreck before it fell, there being no spar, as already said, to arrest it.

The vessel was now fast crumbling, and pieces of her were coming on to the beach. The lumber floated out from her also in greater profusion, looking, the keeper said, as it pitch-poled about in the

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combers, like a rail fence coming ashore. Seeing that she could not last long, the desperate order was given for the launch. The keeper and his men kicked off their rubber boots, stripped themselves of their upper clothing, shoved into the breakers, and gave way furiously. All the chance they had of making headway against the stress of the sea was to take advantage of the slender lee the position of the vessel afforded, and, keeping the boat in the narrow track this breakwater made, they bent to their oars with such energy that they actually got within three boats' lengths of the wreck, and were on the point of throwing the heaving-line on board. At this moment a huge green sea suddenly rushed down and threw a shower of lumber about them, breaking one of the oars, fouling the others, and sending the boat back to the shore with a terrible velocity. When the wave was spent the astonished crew found themselves near the beach. There were only a few inches of water in the boat, so buoyantly had she sustained the assault of the surge. She was hauled out, emptied, and another launch was at once made, well to windward, to countervail the drift of the current. This time, by strenuous efforts, the crew succeeded in getting a little more than half-way to the wreck, when the fallen foremast, hanging alongside, swept up, with a lot of riffraff, against the boat, and striking her forward, sent her back almost to the beach. At the same time

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the steering oar, fouling with some lumber, got an abrupt twist, which caused the loom to strike the keeper violently in the back as he stood at his post in the stern, almost paralyzing his arms, and splitting the pins out of the scull-port. Despite the injury he had received, which soon began to disable him, the keeper lashed the oar, bailed out the boat, and took another start for the vessel. The crew, resisting the exhaustion of their previous efforts, bent desperately to the oars, and again succeeded in making about half the distance, when a piece of the vessel's stern came up against the boat; both were struck at the same time by a huge sea, and the boat spun round under the blow, and was swept back toward the shore. Not beaten yet, the crew valiantly dragged the boat up far to windward, with the aim of getting down to the vessel before encountering the fatal stream of wreckage constantly spouting from her bows to the shore, and launched for the fourth time. Their gallant effort was in vain. As they rowed, a double comber swept upon the boat and filled it to the gunwales, forcing a return to the land.

An hour had been consumed in these efforts. It was now six o'clock, and darkness was setting in upon the miserable scene of disaster and struggle. As the baffled crew landed from their fourth attempt at rescue, an intrepid man, Captain Richardson, of the steam-barge Hilton, confronting the keeper with a manner full of confidence, asked to

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be allowed to take the boat and make the effort to save the men on the Granada. The keeper, himself almost incapable of further exertions, owing to the bruises he had received, at once acceded, and a crew composed of four of the life-saving men and two sailors immediately manned the surf-boat under their new leader. The futility of attempting to make head against the irresistible rush of that sea was soon demonstrated. In obedience to Captain Richardson's orders, the boat was launched far to windward. He took the steering oar, and the boatmen, full of resolution, did their level best, cheering and encouraging one another as they rowed, and putting out their strength to the utmost. But their brave leader soon found, as Keeper Groh had seen from the first, that away from the slight lee the wreck made, the sea was impassable. Sixty yards from shore the boat was nearly swamped, and had to be put back to be emptied. Another launch was then made, the breakers growing even heavier as the boat proceeded, until presently one sheeted down and filled it to within six inches of the thwarts. Captain Richardson instantly ordered a return, and upon landing disappeared.

In the mean time Keeper Groh had at once renewed his efforts to establish line communication with the wreck. He fired the gun with a six-ounce charge, but the line, weakened probably by previous trials, parted at some distance from the

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projectile. The keeper hauled in the remainder, and just then caught sight, in the gathering darkness, of one of the sailors drifting toward the shore buoyed by an armful of lumber. The man had been carried well to leeward, and the keeper, tying a rope around his waist, ran down abreast of where he was and rushed deeply into the breakers to seize him. Two seas broke over the keeper in quick succession, and when they fell away and he could see, the man had disappeared. Presently, however, he caught sight of one of the man's hands sticking up from the swirling water through the pieces of lumber, and clutching hold of it, he shouted to the men on shore to haul on the cord around his waist and drag them in. For some unexplained reason the hold on the line had been relinquished, and it was only by a violent effort that the keeper succeeded in regaining the shore, which he did without letting go of his man. The latter proved to be the mate of the vessel, William Bissett. A fire had been kindled on the beach and the keeper led the rescued man up to it, stripped him of his shoes and a portion of his wet clothing, and went to work rubbing his limbs. It was then snowing hard, and bitter cold; the keeper was himself half frozen, being in his stocking feet and drenched to the skin, the only dry article of clothing upon him being his cap, which he put at once on the head of the sailor. Just as his operations began, one of the life-saving

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crew and some citizens came dripping to the fire bearing another of the shipwrecked men, named Mathias Sapps, whom they had just pulled out of the surf. He was almost lifeless, but gradually came to himself under the rude ministrations of the bystanders. Meanwhile the keeper dispatched one of the surfmen to the station for some dry clothing, continuing to chafe the mate's limbs until he got him into a condition to walk, when he had him conducted to the station for shelter, whither the other man was led also.

The life-saving crew were all drenched, and as they were to watch upon the beach all night, the keeper let them go to the station to change their wet clothing, he occupying himself during their short absence in scanning the dark surf abreast of the wreck, at times being compelled to go to the fire to warm his bare feet, which were nearly frozen, and which the next day were so sore and swollen that boots could not be put on them. In this interim, amidst the confused noises of the tempest, voices seemed to be heard out in the darkness in the direction of the wreck, and soon after these weird and lamentable sounds had ceased, a third man was dragged out of the surf and brought to the fire. This was the last man saved. He proved to be Angus Linklater, brother to the master of the Granada. He had left the wreck, on a sort of raft made of lumber, in company with a sailor named Duffy. The breakers presently split

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the raft in twain, the portion upon which Duffy remained being dashed to pieces and he drowned. The rescued man stated that his brother, the captain, had been swept off the wreck and lost before he himself left the vessel. The other two members of the crew, who perished from exposure, as already stated, while the vessel was out at sea, were a sailor named Owen Conolly, and the steward, whose name is unknown. Of the seven men on board, three were saved.

It seems impossible, from the statements of the survivors, that any one should have been left upon the wreck; but much later, or about nine o'clock, when the crowd upon the beach had greatly thinned, voices were heard calling from the sea during the lulls of the storm. At the edge of the surf a lot of men were scattered along, straining their eyes into the dense gloom, but nothing could be seen but tumbling water and lumber. The mysterious calls appeared to be repeated, and wrought so upon sympathy that Captain Richard Ames, of the schooner Seabird, with some others, got Keeper Groh's permission to again take out the surf-boat. The attempt was made with a picked crew, but they soon returned to shore, having got into the fatal stream of lumber, as all the others had done before them, and not being able to make headway against it.

Nothing more remained to be done. The life-saving crew soon returned from the station and

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patrolled the beach until eight o'clock the next morning, without further result from the wreck.

As is commonly the case when a miscellaneous assemblage is present at a scene of foiled effort, some censure was cast upon Keeper Groh and his crew for failing to rescue the sailors on the Granada. No blame, however, would seem to justly attach to the keeper and his men. Their daring courage and activity in endeavor were conceded on all hands. It was also allowed that the stream of flailing lumber poured from the miserable hulk made her inaccessible by her lee, and that outside her lee the unabated breakers could not be stemmed by the surf-boat, as repeated trials by various parties showed. But it was alleged that the keeper might have gained the vessel under the shelter of the hulk before the wreckage issued from it, had he not spent some time, however short, in attempting to shoot a line on board. To this, which is the only point urged against his conduct of affairs, the answer can be forcibly made that he could not know nor suspect that the hull was about to burst open like a rotten gourd flung against a wall, and that the advantage of getting a line to the wreck, which could be used to save the sailors by the breeches-buoy, or enable them to assist in working out the surf-boat, was so great, in the furiously unnavigable condition of the surf, that he was fully justified in endeavoring to secure it as a preliminary to other effort. It is

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evident, indeed, that the true cause of the loss of life on this occasion is referable strictly and solely to the wretched hull, which at once fell to pieces upon stranding, and used her cargo as weapons of offense against the sorties of the rescue and the efforts at escape of her crew.

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XII

THE SCHOONER A. B. GOODMAN

THE schooner A. B. Goodman, of Seaford, Del., was bound from Baltimore, Md., to New Berne, N. C., with a cargo of guano, and having on board five men, including the captain. On April 4, 1881, at about half past six o'clock in the evening, the vessel struck during a northwest gale upon the outer edge of the inner shoal off Cape Hatteras, and being at once boarded by the sea, there was only time, in the overwhelming rush of waters, for the men to fly to the rigging; in the effort to gain which, one of them, Louis Beck, was swept overboard and drowned.

The point at which the disaster took place was about three miles from shore, and six miles east of Life-Saving Station No. 22, Sixth District, North Carolina. This station is built upon the rise of an eminence known as Creed's Hill, and its north patrol reaches for six miles around the edge of the dreaded cape. Looking from the station, the view toward the cape presents to the eye the aspect of an immense desert of sand, strangely and fantastically sprinkled all over with gnarled and twisted trunks of black, dead trees. In winter, or during the

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inclement season, nothing more dismal could well be imagined than this Sahara, with its thin remnant of a former vegetation killed by the salt tides. The level is diversified only by occasional mounds of sand, and, here and there, pools of sea-water, left by some overflow in the hollows. Behind, or to the west, a forest of pines and live-oaks, dense and almost impenetrable, stretches away northward to Hatteras lighthouse. All around the cape for two miles, in storms at flood tides, a heavy sea swings across the low and somewhat shelving beach, in among its bordering hummocks, and back again with violence, plowing gullies as it runs. The surf makes the sand a quag, quicksands form in the gullies, and the solitary patrolman, making his way along the top of the beach in the darkness by the dim light of his lantern, faces the chances of destruction, being liable to be swept off his feet by the rush or refluence of the surf, sucked down in the gullies by the quicksands, or struck by some fragment of wreck stuff shot forth by the breakers. Yet his dreadful watch is made necessary by the presence offshore of a nest of shoals, range after range, which are the terror of navigators. The first, a mile wide, stretches from the point of the cape between two and three miles seaward, covered with a depth of only seven feet of water, which in storms are miles of raging foam. This formation is, in fact, a submarine prolongation of the cape. Beyond it, separated by half a mile of

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channel, is another formidable shoal, the Diamond, two miles long; and beyond this again, another range of shallows, the outer shoals. For six or seven miles out from shore, these terrible bottoms spread their ambush for shipping, and hence the watch in this locality for vessels in danger requires to be particularly kept around the point of the cape, no matter at what toil or hazard to the sentinel. On the evening of the disaster to the A. B. Goodman, the patrolman, pursuing his journey through the floods sheeting across his way, in the midst of a squall of rain and snow, saw far off, despite the distance and thick weather, the dim outlines of a vessel, and knew by this indication that there was some sort of craft in the neighborhood of the shoals, though exactly where, or whether in danger, it was impossible to determine. The fact was reported by ten o'clock to the keeper, B. B. Daily, who was up at dawn, and saw the schooner evidently aground, and, in fact, sunk, on the outer edge of the first range of shoals. He at once ordered out the surf-boat to the rescue.

The storm of the evening before had been brief, and the wind, blowing freshly from the north-northwest, had beaten down the surf upon the beach. The sea, therefore, was smooth for launching, but beyond, it was very heavy. Heaps of rough water incessantly tumbling, and thickets of bursting foam, filled the offing, and the current running one way, while the wind was the other,

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made an ugly cross-sea. The little group of surfmen about to enter upon this stormy field had still a more serious peril before them than the chance of being overswept or capsized by the colliding waters. Their boat being light and flat-bottomed, the breeze, which was strong and offshore, might make return impossible, and force them out to sea, where they would almost certainly be lost. Nevertheless, as the stout keeper naïvely said in his testimony, "they knew it was their duty to do what they could, so they did it." The group was composed of the keeper, B. B. Daily, and of Surfmen Thomas J. Fulcher, Damon M. Gray, Erasmus H. Rolinson, Benjamin F. Whidbee, Christopher B. Farrow, and John B. Whidbee, the last-named a substitute for a member of the crew absent on leave. One of the crew, Z. Basnett, was left in charge of the station. It is certain that none of the others counted upon returning alive. The disposition of their slender effects was a part of the charge given to Surfman Basnett by his companions in case they perished. Having thus made each his simple will, as men facing the issues of life and death, they entered the boat and gave way.

For a long way out the surf-boat kept the lee of the cape, where the surf, flattened by the offshore wind, was comparatively smooth. Once beyond the point of the cape, they entered the rough water, and their gravest peril was encountered

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when, rounding the end of the inner shoal, they gained the slue or channel, lying between the inner and Diamond Shoals, down which they had to row for perhaps a mile to the locality of the wreck. In this channel, all there was of the cross-sea was in full career, and the greatest circumspection was necessary in the management of the boat. Finally, at about half past seven o'clock, two hours after starting, the life-saving crew arrived near the wrecked schooner.

She was completely sunk, her hull all under. Only her two masts stuck up from the swirling water, and perched up in the main crosstrees, wrapped in the main gaff-topsail, were huddled the four wretched survivors of her crew of five. After three or four daring and dangerous attempts to get near, baffled by the strong current and the vast commotion of the sea above the sunken hull, Keeper Daily hailed the wretched group up on the mast, telling them to keep good heart and that they would be rescued as soon as possible; then dropped astern about 300 yards and let go the anchor, having decided that it was necessary to a successful effort to wait. The efforts already made had consumed much time, and the boat anchored within an hour of noon. An hour afterward, the flood tide somewhat smoothed the break of the sea over the sunken hull, and the life-saving crew got up their anchor, worked up to the windward of the vessel, where they again moored, and then

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slowly and cautiously, by slacking on the anchor line, let the boat veer down toward the mainmast of the wreck. Once within range, the keeper hove his boat-hook, by a line attached, into the rigging and held on. The fateful moment had arrived, the boat was slacked in, so that the keeper could get hold of the first man that came down from aloft, and the first mate slowly descended the rigging. As he came within reach, the keeper, standing in the stern of the boat, seized him; but the man, terrified at the frightful rush and roar of waters beneath him, and doubtless unmanned by cold and hunger and the many hours of horror he had undergone, broke from the keeper's hold and clambered up the rigging again. The boat was hauled back a little, and the keeper spoke up cheerily, encouraging the men in the crosstrees, and declaring they would all be saved. Presently, the line was again slacked, the boat veered down, and the mate once more descended. His fright again seized him, but the keeper, forewarned, got a mighty hold, and by sheer force jerked him out of the rigging and landed him in the boat. The captain then came down, was seized by the keeper the moment he came within reach, and torn from the shrouds. The other two men, emboldened by this energetic succession of deliverances, slid down the rigging and jumped into the boat without aid. Quickly the keeper then let slack his warp, recovered his boat-hook, and gave the word to haul back

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to the anchor. Three of the rescued men were seated on the thwarts, the captain in the stern-sheets, the anchor was got up, and the hard work of the return began.

By this time the wind had changed to west-southwest, blowing freshly, and so roughening the water on the south side of the shoals — which was the side on which the approach to the wreck had been made — that the keeper decided it would be safer to attempt the landing on the north side, or near Hatteras lighthouse. The men gave way with a will, wind and sea against them. The light-keepers, watching them as they toiled upon the running swells, had some time before made up their minds that they would not be able to get to land that night, if they ever did. But the strenuous effort conquered, and somewhere about two o'clock the life-saving crew, dripping and exhausted, gained the beach, near the lighthouse tower, with the sailors they had saved.

These sailors were at once taken up to the light-house by the keepers, where a meal was set before them. No food had passed their lips since about eleven o'clock of the day previous, and they were nearly perished with cold and hunger. Their rescuers were in little better case, having eaten nothing since four o'clock the day before, a period of about twenty-two hours. Nevertheless, without waiting to share in the repast of the sailors, they set off to their own quarters, a tramp by the

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shortest cut across the cape of nearly five miles. They reached the station greatly exhausted. All of them had been out on the tempestuous patrol for some part of the night before, some of them from two o'clock in the morning until dawn. From this night of broken rest they had passed abruptly to eight hours of tragic labor under the shadow of death upon the sea. Their valiant rescue achieved, there still remained this long trudge, which left them finally at the station, a group of haggard, worn-out men.

Descant is unnecessary upon the feat they performed in saving the four sailors. Such deeds attest themselves; and there are few scenes in human life more deeply affecting than the spectacle of this crew of poor men making their wills upon the beach, and leaving their small store of effects in charge of a comrade for the benefit of their families before entering upon a struggle of deadly peril for the lives of four unhappy creatures, who, in their dying misery, must have thought themselves abandoned forever by men, if not beyond all human aid. To have done this — to have quietly resigned the certainties for the chances of existence in such a case and under such circumstances — was more than noble; and there are no hearts, however cold, that will not feel that in this action the unassuming surfmen of an obscure coast reached again, as many low-down and almost nameless men have often reached, the full stature of heroism.

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XIII

THE STEAMER JAMES D. PARKER

On March 5, 1882, the crew of Life-Saving Station No. 10, Ninth District (Louisville), won the crowning trophy of their year of splendid service by a great rescue at the wreck of the James D. Parker, a well-known river-boat, which was lost, almost in a moment, in the Indiana chute of the Ohio Falls. The James D. Parker was a stern-wheel steamer of over 500 tons, owned by the Cincinnati and Memphis Packet Company, and bound with a miscellaneous cargo from Cincinnati to Memphis. Her crew numbered fifty, including the captain, and she had fifty-five passengers on board, a number of whom were women and children. She had arrived at Louisville the day before, and taken on about thirty tons of freight, in addition to about 500 tons she had on board. Being ready to start, her captain decided to take her over the falls, to avoid the delay of going through the canal. A veteran falls pilot, Captain Pink Varble, was engaged to handle her, assisted by two other pilots; and as the water was deep, owing to the swollen state of the river, no particular danger was anticipated, the only misgiving felt being on ac-

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count of the well-known hardness of the boat to steer.

The day was Sunday. A light rain was falling, and the brimming river, running with a swift current against the southwest wind, was roughened into great waves. At about half an hour after noon, the bell on the hurricane deck of the steamer tapped the signal to the deck-hands to let go the lines which moored her to the wharf-boat. There was a considerable crowd upon the wharf-boat and river bank, which burst into loud cheering, accompanied by much waving of handkerchiefs, in sympathy with the handsome sight the steamer made as she crunched and clanked into the stream, with her plumes of smoke and steam drifting above her in the gray air. The acclamations presently died away, and the crowd watched her in silence. She steamed for some distance up the river, then stopped, and the spectators saw her round to and straighten herself grandly for the descent into the chute. In a moment they heard the sharp single stroke of her bell, — the signal to go slow, the captain having told the pilot that she steered best on a slow bell, — and saw her come sweeping down and past, and go with majesty over the full waters of the dam into the rapids. For a few moments they saw her hold her course superbly down the streaming flood. But presently there was a spectacle which had at first something about it at once perplexing and illusory. They saw the steamer sheer

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to the left and wabble sideways, her bow gradually disappearing and soon disappearing altogether; then saw her careen suddenly to starboard, her smokestacks quietly topple over, and a cloud of steam burst from her high up into the air, like a blast from a volcano. This upward leap of vapor came from the rush of the flood into her furnaces. She had gone down in eighteen feet of water.

The crowd of spectators on shore were at once thrown into the wildest consternation. What had so suddenly taken place was not immediately understood, and it went like wildfire over the city that the steamer had blown up while descending the chute, and that every one on board had been lost. This was the idea which possessed the swarm of people who came in hurrying streams down every avenue that led to the river side. The straining eyes of the gazers soon saw, however, that the hurricane deck of the steamer was above water, with the passengers and crew grouped upon it, a sight which indicated the real nature of the occurrence and precluded the idea of an explosion. What had really taken place was this. The steamer was going well with the swift current, strictly and without deviation, when suddenly she began to sheer away to the left. The pilot, first by himself, then with the aid of the captain and others, threw the wheel over in the effort to straighten her, but she continued to sheer off. The truth would seem to be that she was loaded

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unequally; her bow, in which was the greater weight of her cargo, drawing six feet, and her stern only three and a half, so that her rudders were lifted too high to get a good grip of the water and enable her to be steered. She kept sheering, and the pilot, white as death, but cool, seeing that she was heading for a big rock, rang the bell to back her, endeavoring at the same time to straighten her with the helm. But she would not mind her rudders, and, in backing, presently struck the left-hand reef. A desperate effort with the wheel straightened her for a moment, but she again sheered to the left, began going down broadside to, swung clear around, and went bumping against the rocks as she drifted, with her bow gradually submerging. Presently her stern was entirely knocked off, her bow went down and hung to the rocks, the after end swung out into the channel towards the Indiana shore, and she sunk, about 200 feet below the lofty railroad bridge which spans the river, under which she had passed, listing over as she settled, and her upper works rending and breaking and falling in a crashing shower.

The light rain that was descending at the time the steamer was about to shoot the falls had the effect of keeping a large number of the passengers below, especially the women and children, a circumstance which added features to their experience of shipwreck other than they might have

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known had they been up on deck, as in fair weather they probably would have been, witnessing the spectacle of their voyage down the swift flood of the chute. The table was laid for dinner in the saloon, or cabin, when the disaster occurred. The first monition of what was coming received by those below was a rapid succession of thumps, followed by a dreadful crash. A number of the people, including groups of terrified women and children, started to get up on deck, when the boat careened, and at once there was a scene of the utmost horror and confusion. The people rushing around the cabin or scrambling to the doorway were thrown down, the table fell with an immense crash of glass and dinner ware, the supports of the hurricane deck gave way under the wrenching strain of the careen, the roof crushed in in places, and a rain of barrels and boxes and miscellaneous merchandise, the cargo of the deck, fell thundering through among the passengers. Amidst all this instantaneous wreck and ruin were staggering figures, with faces white with terror, and mingled with the tumult of shrieks, cries, lamentations, and heart-broken sobbing, were shouts of command from the deck, the noise of trampling feet, the groaning and creaking of timbers, and the rush and gurgle of waters entering the broken hull. Then came a final shock, and all that was human in the tumult grew still. In the cessation of sound there was a long quiver of the

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hull, another and last careen, and the sky was seen through the rifted bulkhead. The steamer had parted from stem to waist, and was now a dead wreck. The spectacle she would have presented to any outside gazer was that of a mass of crushed and splintered timbers, bales and boxes of merchandise, spars, ropes, chains, and rigging, jutting from the water, which nearly submerged it, two black smokestacks hanging obliquely from it, still held by their guys, and the whole surmounted by a broken slant of hurricane deck, crowded with wild and desperate figures. This dismal mass constantly quivered with loud cracking noises, mingled with the roar of the water which plunged and spouted up around it.

The passengers, men, women, and children, had, as already intimated, succeeded in climbing out of the canted cabin upon the upper deck. So steep was the floor that several of the ladies on the lower side had to put chairs one above another to enable them to reach the door. The water had soon begun to enter the cabin on the lower side, and one lady among the latest to escape was waist-deep when dragged out by the captain through a hole in the roof. All the occupants of the cabin were fortunately extricated, and for the first time since the catastrophe grouped upon the summit. With the assurance that the wreck rested on the bottom and could sink no deeper, the unfortunate people began to hope that they might yet be

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saved, when a new horror was dashed upon them. The stove in the saloon had been overturned when the boat careened, and the wreck had taken fire. Already the blue smoke was seen curling up from below, and in it, flickering and vanishing like the tongues of snakes, were flames. The sense of what might presently happen sickened every heart, but the stage of wild fright was over, and recovering their self-possession, the male passengers fell to with the crew and fought the flames with buckets. The fire broke out again after being once subdued, but was finally got under for good.

The whole catastrophe, with its wild drama of perils and apprehensions, took place within ten minutes, and before the expiration of that time the imperiled concourse on the hurricane deck, with the water lapping around them, had taken courage from the sight of the life-saving boats shooting toward them from the distance. In fact, the steamer had little more than gone down before the life-savers, from the station three quarters of a mile away, were alongside, red and wet with their tremendous row — so prompt were they to bring deliverance to the company upon the wreck. With their keen instinct for danger, they had scented disaster to the vessel almost before its first beginning, and had lost no time in launching to the rescue. Boatmen Edward Farrell and John J. Tully were in the station lookout when the steamer went into the chute, and instantly saw

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that she was going to become unmanageable. They at once gave the alarm, and the next minute the keeper, Captain William M. Devan, was in one boat, the Reckless, with Farrell and Tully, while Boatmen John F. Gillooley and Joseph Martin, with a gallant volunteer, Captain Jim Duffy, leaped into the other, the Ready, and the two boats sprang upon the track of the steamer with an energy that made their strakes quiver and their oars bend like reeds. As they sped their furious course the two crews had upon their minds the exhortation roared at them by the lion-hearted keeper upon starting, that every soul on board the steamer would be lost if they did not arrive before she went down, and with this thought they made the rowlocks rattle, tearing straight over the dam and down the chute with a speed that outran its current, in the wake of the drifting and sinking hull. When they foamed up alongside she had just sunk — fortunately in comparative shallows — 400 yards from shore, and lay, as already described, heeled over, with the lower part of her hurricane deck under water. Upon the slanted upper part — the only portion of the wreck not submerged — they saw her passengers and crew, 105 persons in all, a pallid and trembling assemblage, who welcomed their appearance with cries and imploring gestures. Not a moment was lost. Both boats dashed up to the edge of the half-sunk deck, the keeper shouting to the people, "Get

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into these life-boats quick!" A door was wrenched off the cabin for a gangway plank, and on this incline the people began to slide down into the boats, the women and children first, and the work of the rescue began furiously. It was not known at what moment the cabin top might fall to pieces or be torn off by the waters, so that the moment a boat was filled she raced for the Indiana shore, 400 yards away, discharged her cargo of saved, and tore back again for another load. In this way about twelve trips were made, and eighty persons were landed by the men of the station. The remaining twenty-five were picked up in the water, some of them a mile or two down the river, clinging to casks or boxes, a number of skiffs and boats having arrived upon the scene as the life-saving work went on. No one perished, and the life-saving crew were divided between exultation at the success of their own valiant efforts and wonder that a wreck so complete and utter should have happened without the loss of a single life.

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XIV

THE STEAMSHIP PLINY

On May 13, 1882, the British steamship Pliny, of Liverpool, 1069 tons register, Robert Mitchell, master, stranded on the bar off Deal Beach, N. J., shortly after three o'clock in the morning, while on a voyage from Rio Janeiro to New York with twenty-five passengers and a valuable cargo of coffee and hides. The bar on which she struck is about 150 yards from the beach. There were sixty-one souls on board, all told; the crew numbering thirty-six, including the stewardess. Among the passengers were three women and ten children, one of the latter being an infant two months old.

Fresh to strong northeasterly gales had prevailed for several days, causing a rough surf upon the shore. The sky was overcast with low and heavy clouds, which rendered the morning a very dark one; the gloom being intensified by drizzling rain, so that the steamer was close to the land before its proximity was known. Her commander had believed himself well to the eastward, off the Long Island coast, and he was therefore heading her on a west-southwest course (dead on to the land) when the lookout descried breakers ahead.

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The helm was instantly put to starboard, but before she could be brought around she grounded heavily on the sand-bar, broadside to, with her head to the southward. As soon as she struck, the seas commenced breaking against and over her, fore and aft.

Finding she remained hard and fast, several distress rockets and a "Holmes" signal were burned to call assistance from the shore. The hatches were soon burst in, and the water poured into the vessel in large volumes, and before long the engines ceased working. The three boats on the port or offshore side were also washed from their davits and swept away. The passengers, much alarmed, rushed on deck in a state of panic; but the officers reassured them and persuaded them to return to their quarters, there being danger at times of the seas carrying them overboard if they remained on deck. As it was near daybreak the captain felt hopeful that assistance would soon arrive, but to be prepared for the worst he mustered the crew and got the starboard life-boat ready for lowering.

By the time this was done it was light enough to see a party of men who arrived on the beach abreast of the ship, and, as the captain thought, made signs for the crew not to lower the boat, and then started back from whence they came to the southward. It appears that, the evening before, Surfman Benjamin Van Brunt, of Station

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No. 6, which, with all other stations in the Fourth District, had been closed for the summer season on April 30, who resides at Whitesville, about two miles inland from Asbury Park, had a social gathering at his house. Among others invited were Joseph S. Knowles, who had served a portion of the last season at the station, and Russell White, of Asbury Park. The night being stormy, Van Brunt, Knowles, and White agreed to go to the beach on the lookout for wrecks. Arriving on the beach at about two o'clock in the morning, White suggested that they take shelter in his fish hut on the southerly edge of Great Pond, the northern boundary of Asbury Park, and that each in turn keep watch. This being settled, White went out on patrol, lantern in hand, while Van Brunt and Knowles remained inside; the latter busying himself in making a fire in the stove.

Soon after three o'clock White returned and reported seeing a rocket to the northward. His companions hurried out, and the three started up the beach, using a small boat of White's for ferriage across the pond, which was open to the sea. The sight of a second rocket, while crossing in the boat, quickened their movements, and upon reaching the opposite bank they started on a run for the spot indicated by the signals, stopping for a moment at the life-saving station near the pond (No. 6), to leave a hatchet, which one of them carried in anticipation of the necessity of breaking

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in the doors to get the apparatus out. At the distance of a mile and a quarter from the station they found a large vessel aground on the bar, nearly abreast of what is known as Sickles Pond. The lantern was swung to apprise those on board that their situation was known, and then the three returned in haste towards the station. Mapping out as they went the best course to be pursued, Knowles took the lantern and proceeded in a south-westerly direction to the farmhouse of Mr. Hathaway, at Deal, for a span of horses to draw the apparatus, while his companions kept along the beach to the station. Van Brunt attempted to pry open the large boat-room doors, but failing in this, he suggested to White, after a short parley, that the small door be burst open. It was the best thing to be done, as Keeper Slocum lived two miles away, and to go to him for the keys would involve the loss of too much precious time. Suiting the action to the word, a few vigorous blows on the door gave them access to the living-room, and a moment later the large doors of the boat-room were swung open. Van Brunt's familiarity with the location of everything in the house assisted him, in the dark, to find the signal rockets. But how to fire them was the next question, as neither of the men had a match in his possession. After diligent search, Van Brunt found just one. Without waiting to light the station lamp, in their excitement, they succeeded in firing off

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two rockets with the match thus found, and then cleared away the apparatus and hauled it out of the house. This was a laborious task for two men, and by the time it was done Knowles arrived with Hathaway's team, which was driven by one of the farm hands. The beach cart containing the breeches-buoy apparatus was hitched behind the farm wagon and a start made along the country road leading to Elberon and Long Branch.

Just as they were leaving the station, Cornelius Van Note, one of the old crew, arrived on his way to the beach. He was requested to call Samuel Van Brunt, Benjamin's brother, and when the party reached the road, one of them, Knowles, jumped off at the house of Borden Walcott, another of the regular crew, and notified him. Thus reinforced, the relief party made all possible haste to the locality of the stranded vessel, where they arrived at about half past four. It was now light and the scene was a wild one.

Out on the bar lay a large steamer in the midst of the heaviest breakers, which kept up a tremendous battery against her side, and deluged the deck with foam. Her people could be seen scattered about wherever any shelter was afforded, — some on the bridge, to leeward of the chart-room, amidships, some forward under the break of the forecastle, and others aft under the lee of the saloon cabin, — but all anxiously peering towards the shore, watching and waiting for help. In the

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cold gray dawn the sight of those poor people drenched and shivering on the wreck was enough to quicken the pulse of the most callous. The little band on shore seemed nerved to extraordinary exertion, and went to work manfully and earnestly at the task of rescue. The beach opposite the wreck is about fifty yards wide, and back of that rises a steep bluff perhaps twenty or twenty-five feet high. It was on this bluff that the rescuers had called a halt. There were present the two Van Brunts (Benjamin and Samuel), Van Note, White, Knowles, Walcott, and Mr. Hathaway; the driver, John Smith, having been sent back with his team for the surf-boat.

Benjamin Van Brunt assumed, for the time, the direction of the operations, and while he and Knowles loaded and prepared the gun, the others planted the sand-anchor and arranged the lines. Everything being in readiness, Van Brunt handled the lock-string and sent the shot over the vessel with beautiful precision, the line (a No. 9) falling among the assembled people on the bridge, abaft the smokestack.

The steamer's crew, knowing the purpose of the line, ran it in, hand over hand, and on receiving the whip-block it was passed into the fore-rigging and made fast around the foremast, about twenty feet from the deck. Next came the hawser; but owing to the smallness of the party on shore, they were unable to dispose of their force

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in such a way as would keep the lines asunder while in transit, and the result was that the two parts of the whip became almost inextricably twisted by the action of the current setting strongly to the southward around the hawser, and thus matters came to a temporary standstill. Failing to clear the lines readily, they hauled the boat, which had just arrived, down to the beach, with the intention of launching it. There were scarcely men enough present to man her, and while they were debating what should be done next, Keeper Green, of No. 5 (Long Branch), arrived in his wagon, and also Surfmen John Redmond and John Pierce, of Station No. 7 (Shark River). The two latter had journeyed from the vicinity of their station, several miles distant, having seen the two rockets sent up from No. 6 by Van Brunt and White. From long experience in the service they understood the import of the signals and made all the haste possible on foot, arriving in season to render good service.

Green, being the only keeper on the ground, assumed command. After consultation it was decided that the surf was still too dangerously high to venture with the boat, although the tide had fallen somewhat. All hands therefore turned to again in an effort to clear the entangled lines. After considerable difficulty they succeeded, with the aid of the steamer's crew, in getting the gear into working order, and the breeches-buoy was sent

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off. It was then between half past six and seven o'clock. The first to land was a woman, and she was followed by one of the men with a child in his arms, or rather nestled under his coat. Their experience was a rough one, from the fact that the hawser had slacked by the vessel working inshore a little. It naturally followed that when midway between the ship and shore, the sag of the line, weighted with its living freight, carried the buoy into the water, and gave the poor baby and the man a ducking. It was only momentary, however, for strong hands and willing hearts soon brought them safely ashore. The hawser was then tautened, and with one or two men to attend the tackle and keep the necessary strain on the large line, the work of rescue went on until all the passengers were landed. As each one came in Mr. Hathaway superintended their dispatch in vehicles to the house of Samuel Hendrickson, which was the nearest place of shelter. Some of them reached the beach in sorry plight, barefooted and almost nude; indeed one woman was so nearly naked that a bystander was called upon for his overcoat to cover her when lifted from the buoy. It was also found necessary to send to the station for blankets to cover others. The children, poor little creatures, were the worst off. Barefooted and thinly clad in garments such as are worn in the tropic climate of Brazil, the searching north-east wind and chilling mist gave them a pinched

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and woe-begone appearance, which excited the active sympathy of the shore folk, who did everything possible for their comfort. The box of clothing placed at Station No. 5, by the Women's National Relief Association, was found very useful at this juncture, as it contained just what was wanted. The residents also contributed freely in the same direction.

As the work of rescue progressed quite a crowd of people from Asbury Park, Deal, Elberon, and Long Branch had congregated on the scene, so that before long they could be counted by hundreds, many of them assisting energetically in the manipulation of the apparatus. Among the latter were several of the crew of No. 5, who arrived soon after Keeper Green. When the last passenger had been safely landed, there was a pause in the operations, owing to the refusal of the officers and some of the crew to leave the ship. With the recession of the tide the surf gradually subsided, and the question of using the surf-boat again came up. About this time, say half past eight, John Slocum, keeper of No. 6, arrived. The wreck being within the precincts of his station, he took his place at the steering oar, and with a picked crew of men belonging to Nos. 5, 6, and 7, respectively, the boat was taken off in good shape. The ship was upwards of 280 feet in length, and afforded a good lee in approaching her; still, the sea was rough enough to compel

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the exercise of judgment and skill in making the trip. There were Asher Wardell of No. 5, William Van Brunt and Cornelius Van Note of No. 6, and John Redmond and John Pierce of No. 7, with Benjamin Van Brunt of No. 6 at the stroke. The steamer's crew were brought ashore in four trips, the captain and officers coming last. All hands could have been landed in three trips but for the refusal of the officers to leave her. The boat's crew reported this fact when they landed the third time, and Keeper Green decided to go off and point out the danger of their remaining. This had the desired effect, and the officers were soon afterwards safe on the beach. On one trip a sailor in coming over the ship's side lost his hold and fell into the water between the ship and one of her boats which had been lowered and was lying alongside. The surf-boat, at the time, was alongside the ship's boat. Observing the man fall, Keeper Slocum jumped into the ship's boat from his own, and seized the man by the collar, threw him on his back, deftly rolled him over the gunwale, inboard, and helped him into the surf-boat. But for this feat of skill and strength, which showed true life-saving craft, the man might have drowned, as in a moment more he would have been swept away by the current. It is related, however, that he expostulated at Slocum's rough and ready rescue, when the latter retorted that he could not afford to stand by and see him

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drown. The fact is, the man was under the influence of liquor, which had been surreptitiously obtained from the spirit-room by some of the men while the officers were busily superintending the landing of the passengers. In this connection another incident should be mentioned. When the captain was about to leave the ship, he directed the second and fourth officers to make diligent search fore and aft, to be sure they were leaving no one on board. The officers reported all hands out of the ship. With this assurance they shoved off and were taken ashore. This was at ten o'clock. Supposing, of course, that the work of rescue was complete, the beach party naturally turned their attention towards making the visitors cast in their midst as comfortable as possible, the crew of the ship going to Station No. 6. What was the astonishment, then, of the crowd left on the bluff idly watching the wreck, at seeing about two o'clock in the afternoon a man moving about the deck, who finally ascended the fore-rigging and made signs of getting into the breeches-buoy, which hung to the hawser, just as it had been left near the ship, when the crew refused to come ashore in it. Getting responsive signals from the bluff, he clambered into the buoy, and in a few minutes was on terra firma, surrounded by his rescuers, who plied him with questions as to how he came to be left behind. He proved to be the carpenter of the ship. It appeared that while the

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boat was engaged in landing the ship's company early in the forenoon he had taken his place in it, but changing his mind he managed in the confusion of the moment to climb back on board unnoticed, and go below, out of sight. He claimed that he had been asleep and did not know the rest had gone ashore.

Most of the passengers and crew were sent by rail to New York late the same day, the latter being taken in charge by the British consul, while the captain and officers remained at Long Branch, at the house of Keeper Green, for several days.

With the subsidence of the storm on the following day, the mails and some baggage were recovered; but as the ship had then broken in two amidships, all hope of saving her was abandoned. In the operations at this wreck, twenty-one trips were made by the breeches-buoy, and thirty-one persons, including the ten children, were brought ashore in it, while thirty were landed by the surf-boat, aggregating a total of sixty-one saved.

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XV

A DAY'S WORK

A WRECK took place on the 24th of November, 1882, four miles north of the Grand Point au Sable Station, Lake Michigan. The vessel was the schooner J. O. Moss of Chicago, Ill., bound to that place from East Frankfort, Mich., with a cargo of shingles, and having a crew of six men. She had been struck by a sudden gale and snow-storm the afternoon of the day preceding (November 23), and failing to weather Grand Point au Sable, and drifting rapidly to leeward, she was anchored during the night just outside of the breakers, three miles north of the lighthouse. One of the patrolmen from the station a mile beyond the lighthouse discovered her at about three o'clock in the morning, and returning to the station reported the fact to the keeper, who at once roused his men and hurried one of them forward to keep watch upon her. The remainder of the crew soon followed and arrived abreast of the vessel at daybreak. Just as they came up they saw her part her chain, swing around, and drift toward the beach. The spectacle was of the wildest. A northwest gale was raging with a universal whirl

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of snow, the sea was a mass of crashing breakers, and through all came the schooner, broadside to the shore, rolling, the keeper said, worse than he had ever seen a vessel roll, the hull completely smothered in the surf, and the crew up in the rigging. She soon stranded, 500 feet from the beach, and in her stationary position continued her heavy swaying. The keeper, as soon as her advance ceased, hurried with the crew back to the station for the wreck-gun and apparatus, sending forward one of the men to Hamlin, a mile beyond the station, to telephone to Ludington for a team, the conditions of the road and weather making hauling by hand impracticable.

Surfman Stillson, the member of the crew who had been first dispatched to keep watch upon the vessel, remained behind under orders to continue his surveillance. Upon his arrival he had kindled a large fire upon the beach, which he kept well burning. As the morning deepened the tide fell, and although the schooner maintained her convulsive rolling, the sailors were enabled to descend from the rigging to the deck, where they stood clustered around the foremast under the lee of the fore-gaff and boom. At times, however, the sea would suddenly mount and break all over the vessel in a fury of foam, so that not a man on board could be seen. While the surfman stood watching this dismal and terrible show, he suddenly saw one of the men on board preparing to leave for

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the shore in a yawl, carrying the end of a line with him, and at once by every possible gesture attempted to dissuade him, signifying to him also that help was on the way. His efforts proved useless, for the sailor presently set out in the boat, which came plunging in half buried in foam, and in a few moments was flung upside down in the breakers, leaving the man wildly struggling for his life. He would undoubtedly have been drowned, but the surfman, at the greatest personal peril, rushed into the seething water, and managed to clutch him and then drag him on shore. He was almost insensible, but his brave rescuer carried him to the fire, where he soon recovered. The boat drifting ashore, Surfman Stillson got hold of the line attached to it and secured it to a log, the sailors on board hauling it taut and fastening the other end to the wreck. Before long the surfman was horrified to see another of the ship's company, Barney McDonald, the mate, undertaking to make his way to the shore, hand over hand, on the suspended line, and signaled and gesticulated to him with all his might to forbear the effort, letting him know, as he had done in the case of the other sailor, that assistance was coming. But despite his mute appeals the mate continued to swing on, hand over hand, with the surf wallowing and leaping beneath him. He worked along in this way for about twenty-five yards, when he paused for a moment, then all at once let go his

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hold like one exhausted, and dropped into the sea. The surfman gazed with dreadful solicitude at the place where he fell, but the disappearance was instant and final.

In the mean time the station force was toiling heavily on its way through the storm. The team sent for had arrived a little before ten o'clock in the forenoon; the wagon had been loaded up with all the apparatus, except the hawser and hauling-lines, which were in the mortar cart, and the cart hitched on behind; and the party had started in this order on their rough journey. The most direct road was along the beach, but the way was completely strewn with logs and drift stuff of all kinds thrown up by the surf, and the men and horses were forced to take their load along the inside sand-hills, some of the crew going on ahead to choose the best track and throw aside the obstructions which were even there. The most serious obstacle to progress was the soft and yielding sand, over which rapid passage was impossible; but by dint of the strenuous exertions of man and beast the party arrived abreast of the vessel by eleven o'clock, an hour after starting. The line already stretched from the schooner was at once utilized to haul aboard the whip-line, and the tail-block was made fast to the foremast close to the jaws of the boom — too low, but the unfortunate sailors were so cold and exhausted that they could not climb the rigging to fasten it higher. The

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hawser was next hauled on board by the life-saving crew, and attached to the mast by the sailors. It could not be made taut, owing to the continued rolling of the vessel, and the first man brought in by the breeches-buoy, the captain, was alternately in and out of the water, as the lines rose and dipped with the swaying of the hull. Although speedily brought to land, he was insensible upon arrival, — it was at first thought dead, — but he soon revived under the warmth of the beach fire, and brandy from the station medicine-chest was given to restore him. The three men remaining on the wreck were successively brought to land, through and over the surf, arriving, like their captain, drenched and exhausted, and were similarly restored. When sufficiently revived they were all laid in the wagon, covered up with the horse-blankets, and conveyed with all possible speed to the station, where they were supplied with dry clothes and food, and made comfortable. They remained under succor until the next day, when they left for their homes.

The body of the unfortunate mate, McDonald, was searched for that day by members of the station crew, but without result. Three weeks later, or about the middle of December, it was found washed ashore, between Ludington and Pentwater. But for his rash and precipitate attempt to reach the shore, this man would undoubtedly have been saved with his fellows.

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At about the same time that the mate was lost, another sailor was dying in the surf at a wreck a few miles distant, hidden from the view of the Grand Point au Sable crew by a thickly wooded point of land projecting into the lake. The rescue of the sailors from the J. O. Moss was accomplished by noon, and after conveying them to the station the crew returned with the team to look after the apparatus. Two of them went down the beach to search for the body of McDonald, and the remainder had nearly reached the station with the loaded wagon when they were intercepted by two hunters, showing signs of the speed with which they had come, who told them that there was a vessel ashore nine miles behind them, with one man already drowned, and the rest of the crew all in the rigging. The team was instantly put to the right about and started for the wreck. One of the men ran to the station to notify the keeper, who immediately set out after the team, leaving the man with the charge to pick up the other two members of the crew then searching for the body of McDonald.

The vessel to which the crew were now hurrying was the schooner Eclipse of Chicago, laden, like the others, with shingles, and bound to the place above named, from Manistee, Mich., with a crew of six men. She had left Manistee in the afternoon of the preceding day, under favoring winds, but at five o'clock a terrific gale, with a

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heavy snow-squall, blew out of the west-northwest, and before long the schooner was laboring in a tremendous sea. Her effort was to clear Grand Point au Sable, which lay under her lee, passing which she could have made better weather, and to this end she was forced along under a double-reefed mainsail and whole foresail and jib. This press of sail caused her to careen to leeward, so that her deck-load of shingles began to work, and some of them were swept overboard. She kept along, making more leeway than headway, the strain to which she was subjected opening her seams, so that she constantly took in water, until finally, about nine o'clock in the evening, she heeled over so that the sea ran into her galley windows and forecastle, and she filled and lay perfectly helpless, on her side. Breakers were seen to leeward through the blinding snowstorm, and the captain, only hoping now that the vessel might be made to go ashore head on, cut the main peak-halyards, which brought down the mainsail, and caused her to pay off slowly under her head sails, assisted by two heavy seas which struck her bow in succession, and knocked her head around. She had nearly got before the sea, when she struck heavily on the outer bar, but gradually worked over it, and brought up on the inner bar, about 400 feet from shore, where she partly righted. From the moment of striking, the sea made a clean sweep over her, the sailors clinging any way they

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could to the rigging, until she grounded finally, when they all got into the port ratlines, in part sheltered by the head of the mainsail, which had remained partly up. In this wretched situation they remained until the next day, drenched by the flying seas and nearly frozen. All night the snow continued at intervals, adding to their misery. By the forenoon of the next day the clouds began to break, the wind and sea to moderate, and the snow came and went in squalls. The unfortunate sailors needed some mitigation of their suffering, for they were now completely exhausted, and seeing no prospect of relief upon the lonely wooded coast, it was determined among them that one of their number should endeavor to get ashore with a line. Accordingly a sort of raft was improvised by lashing to each corner of the main hatch a bunch of shingles, and a young seaman named Anton Rasmusson started on it for the shore, shoving it along with a pole, and bearing the end of a line. A strong current was running to the southward, to offset the force of which the seaman's efforts were made on the lee side, and when about sixty feet from shore the raft set so strongly against the pole that it broke in the middle. Being now without the means of propulsion, the poor seaman, taking with him the end of the line, jumped overboard and attempted to swim ashore. His mates saw him struggle for a few minutes in the water, then disappear. He was lost.

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After this calamity the unhappy men on board resigned further effort. But at noon they suddenly saw the two hunters on the beach opposite the vessel, and the captain made energetic signs that he wanted the help of the life-saving station below the point, and had the satisfaction of seeing the men start off on the run.

It was about half past one when the hunters came upon the remnant of the life-saving crew, then toiling back to the station from the wreck of the J. O. Moss. As already stated, the team bearing the apparatus at once turned upon its tracks to the rescue. The second journey was more arduous and terrible than the first. As before, the way lay within the sand-hills, the beach being one ragged strew of logs and drift stuff, and the team had to toil up and down the rough dunes, and around their bases when the acclivities were too formidable, tearing and plunging at the same time through undergrowths of brush and over fallen trees and driftwood for an unintermitted stretch of nine miles. Two of the men acted as pioneers, going ahead to pick out the road and heave away the worst obstacles; the others hauled with the team. To add to their difficulties, one of the horses gave out on the way, and had to be helped along, as well as the wagon. The heroic drudgery ended at length by the party arriving abreast of the wreck, just before dark, or at seven o'clock in the evening.

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The two hunters had preceded them. On their way they had found the body of the drowned sailor on the beach three quarters of a mile below the wreck. After securing it they had continued on and lit a good fire in front of the wreck, which was of great service in enabling the sailors to follow the operations of the life-saving crew in the succeeding darkness. These operations began without delay. The gun was planted, and at the first fire threw the shot-line over the stays between the masts. The whip-line and hawser soon followed and were secured to the mainmast, and within an hour the men on board were brought ashore, one by one, in the breeches-buoy. As soon as each man was landed he was given a drink of brandy from the station medicine-chest and taken to the fire for warmth.

As the horses were completely tired out, and the teamster could not undertake to get back over such a road at night, the team was taken into the woods and kept there until morning. The apparatus was piled up safely upon the beach, the lines between the vessel and shore were hauled taut, two members of the life-saving crew were placed on guard, and the remainder, with the rescued sailors, started on their weary tramp for the station, where they arrived, exhausted, drenched, and half starved, at twenty minutes past midnight. The members of the station crew had got thoroughly wet by rushing into the water to help

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the men out of the breeches-buoy at the wreck of the J. O. Moss, and their clothes had frozen upon them and afterwards thawed with their exertions. As for the sailors, besides being soaked through and through, they had been thirty hours without food, fifteen of which they had spent in the rigging. The first thing done upon arrival was to prepare them supper and get them thoroughly dry and warm. Two of them remained at the station until the afternoon of the next day; the other three stayed for three days.

The body of the unfortunate young sailor was given in charge to the coroner, and taken to Ludington. He was twenty-five years of age, and belonged in Chicago, where he was to have been married on his return. It is, of course, obvious that his death under the circumstances could not have been prevented.

The labors of the life-saving crew upon this date seem particularly worthy of honorable comment. They performed the remarkable service of saving life from two wrecks in succession with the same apparatus, working in the second instance with wet and frozen lines, which it required peculiar skill and judgment to handle effectively. To achieve this end involved a severe trudge to and from the station of thirty-four miles, trundling, with the aid of half-blown horses, a heavy wagon-load behind them, through a rough wilderness of brush and sand, and with the concomitants of a batter-

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ing gale and blasts of snow. The heavy work of setting up hawsers and hauling-lines, and dragging upon them in the drench of icy surf through the periods of the rescue, becomes a mere incident to the savage toils of such a journey.

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XVI

THE SCHOONER JESSIE MARTIN

Six days later, on November 30, 1882, another life was lost a mile from the Grand Haven Station, Lake Michigan, incidental to an attempt to get off the stranded schooner Jessie Martin. The vessel belonged at Muskegon, Mich., and on the night of November 23 she ran ashore in a heavy westerly gale on the south side of the piers at Grand Haven. The damage she sustained by this casualty was not serious, and her owner contracted with Mr. John Dibble of Muskegon to get her afloat and have her towed into harbor. She had two holes in her starboard bow — one, above water, which was easily stopped from the outside ; the other, below water, about eight inches in diameter, which could not be got at by the diver, and which was therefore plugged from the inside with a stuffing of gunny bags, held in place by wooden braces from the deck beams. The vessel was then pumped free, and on the morning of November 30, all preparations being completed, the tug W. Batcheller made fast to her by a line about 700 feet long. The weather was cloudy and freezing cold, a southwest gale was blow-

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ing at the rate of thirty miles an hour, and a stormy sea was running in great waves, throwing showers of spray upon the schooner, which accumulated upon her hull, spars, and rigging in rough sheaths of ice. On board was Mr. Dibble, the contractor, a one-armed man, heavily dressed against the weather, and wearing long boots, and there were also six men whom he had employed to prepare the vessel for being pulled off, and who were also well swathed up in storm-proof clothing.

About ten o'clock the tug, then lying abreast of the south pier, steamed away, the tow-line tautened, and the schooner came off the beach with a plunge, and seemed to stand on end between the seas, the water meanwhile bursting upward and madly sheeting all over her. The next instant she plunged downward, covered with foam and spray, then mounted again bow up, as though she were going to leave the sea, the breakers still scattering over her, and continued her progress in this way under the strain of the tow-line, striking the bottom so heavily with each descent as to jar all her timbers, and make the men on board afraid that her masts would be unstepped and thrown out of her. Before long, as she got into deeper water, the pounding ceased, and she began to labor heavily, falling off sluggishly into the vast troughs of the sea, as though water-logged. Probably the violent pounding with which she began her course displaced the gunny-bag packing in the

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hole in her hull, letting the sea stream in, and it is also likely that with the torrents constantly bursting over her she took in water at her hatches, which were on but not fastened down as they should have been. She continued to move forward, wallowing more and more inertly, until the tug had gone about half a mile beyond the pier end and had swept around in a great circle to enter the piers. The schooner had now, following the same curve, swung around broadside to the sea, and as the tug made for the entrance began to feel the tow-line pulling on her starboard bow to bring her head around. What ensued was as speedy as awful. The wretched vessel, lolling in the trough of the sea, so full of water as to be without buoyancy, pushed by the gale upon her port side and pulled by the tow-line upon the other, instead of coming around under the strain, was simply dragged down and rolled over like a log to starboard, settling upon her bulwarks until her masts lay in the water. As she toppled the sea burst all over her hull in a furious cascade, and her hatches fell off and floated away. The men on board as she capsized scattered out into her rigging in a wild scramble for their lives. Incumbered by their clothing, their struggles on an overturning ship, in the whirl of flying water, were of necessity terrible. Three reached the main shrouds, two got to the fore crosstrees, and one to the main. The remaining man, Mr. Dibble, had been in the pas-

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sageway alongside the cabin on the starboard side, and the men in the shrouds could see him, near the surface of the water in that region, vainly trying to climb on to the main boom. As he had but one arm, and was hampered by the abundance of his clothing, his efforts were ineffectual. For a short time he moaned and struggled in the water, but gradually the sounds and motions ceased, and he slowly drowned. Meanwhile the prostrate wreck, with the men clinging to her shrouds and crosstrees, was leaping and floundering, still sluggishly advancing in the tow of the tug, which was endeavoring to get her inside the piers, where there was still water.

Keeper John De Young was at the Grand Haven Station, some distance away, watching from the doorway the operations of the tug from the beginning. His crew were in the house, with the exception of one man out on patrol on the north pier. The moment the schooner capsized he sprang back, shouting to the crew to launch the boat. The station is on the edge of the pier, and with one rush the men poured out, shoved the boat into the water, and tumbled in with alacrity. The tug Johnson was lying near the station, and at once took them in tow, giving them an opportunity to put on their cork jackets, which in their haste they had neglected to don. After towing them about halfway down the piers the tug cast off, and the men seized the oars and pulled

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out, meeting the W. Batcheller outside of the ends of the piers, still towing the wreck in, her steam whistle meanwhile screeching an alarm. They rowed on and soon reached the capsized schooner. A more exciting spectacle could hardly have been encountered. The vessel lay on her side, jumping about like a living thing in the huge wash of the seas, with her masts submerged. Two drenched and streaming figures, waist-deep in the water, clung to the fore crosstrees, one horn of which bobbed around above the surface. Another similar figure was holding on at the main crosstrees. Three others, limp and inert, were hanging in the main shrouds, dipped and thrashed about continually, and most of the time under water. The body of the contractor was in the sea, beneath the mainsail, and not visible.

The keeper speedily made up his mind that the two men on the fore crosstrees were in the most dangerous position, as a gaff or boom was flailing around them with every leap of the hull. Accordingly he steered the boat's bow up to them, the crew cautiously oaring in. The rigging of the wreck was beneath them, and every time the seas fell they could feel it press and scrape against the boat's bottom. As soon as they got within reach the forward men seized the two sufferers, one by one, and dragged them on board. The boat fell away.

The two men rescued, unmanned by fright and

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suffering, and fearful that the boat would be capsized in the raging sea, begged the keeper to put them on shore at once; but he told them that he would first save every one on the wreck or perish; and bidding them stow close and keep still, ordered the boat pulled around the schooner's bow, which was under water, as well as the tow-line; and dropping back on the windward side, abreast of the main rigging, took a momentary survey of the situation. In a moment he sang out to the man in the main crosstrees that he was going to take off the three men in the main shrouds first, as they were in the most danger, to which the man assented. A scene of terrible gallantry now followed. The keeper ordered the man in the bow to throw the boat's painter to the three men in the shrouds, but as the rope fell upon one man inert and the other two apparently dead, it was drawn back, and the effort to attach the boat to the wreck was renewed with the small grapnel. The grapnel, however, could not be made to hold, and the bold surfmen now tried to attach the boat to the rigging by the boat-hooks. Despite the convulsive tumbling of the water, they succeeded for a minute in keeping alongside, and dragged one of the three men aboard over the bow. The next instant a huge sea swept them on top of the wreck, the boat-hooks scattering from the surfmen's hands and getting lost. Another big sea followed and swept them off, carrying them swiftly astern of

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the wreck a boat's length. In a second the oars were out and the men again pulled up alongside. The solitary man in the main crosstrees had meanwhile worked his way along the rigging, and was dragged aboard instantly. Then came a third enormous wave, which washed all over the wreck, and buried one of the two men clinging to the shrouds under water. The keeper could just see his head upon the surface, and fearful that he was going to lose him, shouted to his men to jump and save him. Surfman Paul Vandenburg at once sprang into the flood, but caught his foot in the wreck as he went, and pitched over to leeward, coming up again quickly, floated by his cork jacket. Surfmen Van Toll and Fisher followed him in the jump for the wreck, clutched the submerged man and hauled him by main strength above water, themselves holding by the rigging. They then helped their comrade, Vandenburg, to regain his place in the boat, which he effected with the loss of one rubber boot, his foot having been tangled up in the sunken shrouds.

The fearful excitement of the scene continued in the effort to get the two half-drowned and perishing men on board the surf-boat. Words can hardly describe the difficulties and perils involved in the task. Both of the men were unconscious, half sustained by being enmeshed in the rigging and half by Surfmen Van Toll and Fisher, who held by the shrouds, waist-deep in the water, and

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buoyed up by their cork jackets, waiting their chance to heave the dead weight in their hands into the surf-boat. This chance depended on the boat getting fairly alongside between the seas — no safe nor easy matter, as she followed a vessel steadily receding under tow toward the harbor and bounding from side to side like a wounded whale with every wash of the furious waves. It was only wary manœuvring that kept her from being at any moment flung into the air by collision with the wreck or stove to flinders. Every other minute the torn waters yawned in troughs, into which she dropped to rise the next instant, quivering and leaping on the summit of the curling ridges. The keeper and two surfmen worked her by the oars, while the two others on board were kept steadily bailing, the strong wind keeping her, nevertheless, half full with the spray it showered over her. So great was the peril that the rescued men on board, expecting every moment to be capsized, thought they would be safer on the wreck, and one man even wanted to get overboard and lash himself to the half-sunk rigging. It was under these conditions that the desperate toil of the rescue was conducted, and it was fully half an hour before the two drenched and inanimate figures were got into the boat. Surfmen Van Toll and Fisher then clambered in out of the water, and the surf-boat shoved off and made for the harbor.

Keeper De Young's greatest fear now was that

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the unconscious men might never revive, and the moment the station was reached they were taken upstairs and stripped and put to bed, as were all the others. The man who had been longest under water the keeper at once laid down and practiced on him the method of resuscitating the apparently drowned. It was half an hour before he showed any signs of life and about an hour before he came to. "He was just like a chunk of ice, he was so cold," said the keeper, in his deposition. As soon as he became conscious brandy was given him, and for three hours he was swathed in hot flannels and vigorously rubbed with them by the keeper and his men. Finally he was left between hot blankets, and in about five hours was himself again. Of the other men two were insensible, but were revived without great effort by the rubbing of the life-saving crew and the administration of cordials. There was not at the time any change of clothing at the station, and the six men were kept in bed until their clothes were dried. As for the life-saving crew, they were drenched, and performed their ministrations in the wettest of wet habiliments.

The keeper did not learn of Mr. Dibble's death until after he had left the wreck, and as soon as he was assured of the revival of the man who had been so nearly drowned, or within an hour after the arrival at the station, he had an old metallic boat launched and rowed out with four men to the

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wreck, which was then lying in the still water abreast of the station. The body of the unfortunate man was found under water, beneath the mainsail, held by a turn of the peak-halyards around one leg. He had been thus submerged for over two hours, and was of course lifeless. It is plain that under the circumstances of the catastrophe nothing could have been done to save him.

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XVII

THE SCHOONER ALBERT DAILEY

The schooner Albert Dailey of Augusta, Maine, was wrecked upon Smith's Island, Virginia, on January 7, 1883, three miles northeast by east from the Smith's Island Station (Fifth District), G. D. Hitchens, keeper. The schooner was proceeding with a load of coal and a crew of six men from Baltimore, Md., to Bridgeport, Conn., and at eight o'clock in the evening, owing to a dense fog and a strong current, ran aground upon the Smith's Island beach, about 250 yards from the shore. At half past one o'clock in the night there was a transient lifting of the fog, and a passing patrolman saw her appear for a moment in the murk, like a phantom. He immediately fired a red Coston light, and soon afterward another. The second signal met with a response from the vessel, and he ran for the station and roused the crew. The men turned out with the surf-boat, and after a three miles' drag up the dark beach, launched at a point judged to be somewhere near abreast of the wreck, and rowed off on what proved a quest of the greatest obscurity. The fog had closed in heavily, deepening

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the darkness of the night; and the keeper, standing at the steering oar on the stern, could see nothing but the toiling figures of the rowers and the little area of unquiet waters around the boat, vaguely lit by the lanterns and imbedded in a close surrounding of gloom. The rowing continued long, and it was not until half past four in the morning that this groping search ended, and the vessel loomed upon the sight of the crew.

At the request of the captain, Keeper Hitchens and his men remained on board the schooner until an hour after noon, at which time the sea began to rise, and the entire crew were conveyed ashore in the surf-boat, and made comfortable at the station. The men's personal effects and the ship's papers were also brought to the station.

The next day (January 9), the captain and crew were reconveyed in the surf-boat to the vessel, on board which a bargain was made with Mr. Cobb, of the Cobb Wrecking Company, to get her off, and if possible save the cargo. The keeper then took back the captain to the station, leaving behind Mr. Cobb with three of his wreckers, together with the five men composing the schooner's crew. A blinding snowstorm had now set in, and the keeper, seeing that the wind had gone to the northeast, and that there was every prospect of bad weather, earnestly entreated the wrecking party and the sailors to come ashore; but they absolutely refused, stating that the wrecking company's surf-

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boat was alongside, and would enable them to reach the land at any time should the situation become dangerous. It was finally arranged that until dark, in case they needed assistance, a signal should be set on board, and that afterwards, or at any time if the weather should become thick, they should sound the fog-horn, which could readily be heard on shore. Still apprehensive of danger, Keeper Hitchens, immediately upon his return to land, had his boat hauled up on the beach opposite the vessel, ready for service.

At four o'clock in the afternoon the weather was so thick that the patrols were set. The men were instructed to use the utmost vigilance, and to be particularly on the alert for a signal from the vessel. At eight o'clock in the evening, a patrolman coming in from the beach reported that she could no longer be seen. Nothing, in fact, was now visible, the driving snow having wrought a general obliteration. A heavy gale was streaming from the northeast, and the surf ran high and broke over the sands in torrents.

At half past eleven another patrolman came into the station with the startling news that the schooner's hatches and part of her boat had come on shore, which seemed to indicate that she had sunk or was breaking up. The keeper instantly roused the crew, and he and his men, assisted by the captain of the schooner and by Lieutenant Failing, the inspector of the district, who was at the

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station, loaded up the mortar cart with the wreck-gun and apparatus, and set out for the neighborhood of the disaster. The hauling was dreadful. As already said, the distance was three miles, and the whole way the snow and sleet drove directly in the men's faces, lashed also by the icy blasts, while their heavy burden had to be dragged through twelve inches of snow and slush, over a beach of mushy sand, thickly knobbed with stumps and wattled with tree-roots. It was two o'clock in the morning before the terrible labor was achieved and the exhausted group paused to take breath abreast of the sunken schooner. The dim outlines of her masts could be vanishingly seen at intervals in the darkness, as the gusts rent the whirling snow; but her hull was invisible, proving that it was buried in the furious spread of overrunning surf which crashed without cessation at the feet of the party of rescuers. It was a matter of inference that the people on board had sought refuge in the rigging, which was afterwards known to be the case, they having been driven aloft by a rising of the sea so sudden and so inundating as to leave them no time to make the signal agreed upon with the keeper. With a view of discovering, if possible, the exact position of the vessel, as well as of encouraging the unfortunate sailors and wreckers, the keeper burned six Coston signals in succession; but their illumination failed to reveal the wreck, now muffled from sight by the snow-

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storm, and at three o'clock it was determined to make an effort to reach her with the surf-boat, which, as previously stated, had been left on the beach, in anticipation of its use being required. The launch was accordingly made, but such was the stress of sea and current that it took nearly an hour, consumed in several attempts, to even get away from the beach, clear of the breakers. Once beyond the outer line of broken water, some distance was accomplished, but the boat inevitably fell to leeward, there being no light upon the vessel to guide her, nor any sight nor sound in that direction; and the keeper, realizing how impossible it would be, in case the wreck was reached, to get the men down from the rigging in that swollen and tumultuous sea, and fearful that at any moment the boat might be smashed to pieces in the darkness by floating timbers, thus cutting off all hope of a rescue, determined that he must wait for daylight, and accordingly put back to the shore.

The day broke drearily upon a dismal and terrible spectacle. In the obscure light two masts with their spars and cordage spired from an immense heaped sea, which ran and roared in universal foam and spray. Up aloft, lashed to the fore-rigging, where they had been since the day before, were the sufferers of the wreck, whitened and shapeless with the frozen accumulations of the tempest. They lay back aslant upon the ratlines in attitudes

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and postures indicative of numbness and exhaustion. The spectators saw all this through the stormy veiling of the snow.

It was plain that a boat could not be launched upon that field of swollen and tumbling water, and no time was lost in training the Lyle gun upon the wreck for an effort to rescue the men by the breeches-buoy. The first shot threw the line across the jib-boom, but the men did not move from the fore-rigging to secure it, and after a short time the keeper hauled it in and fired again. This time the line fell in nearly the same place, but as no effort was made by the men on the wreck to get hold of it, it was evident that they were too weak from exposure to risk a descent toward the hull, over which the torrents were bursting every moment and might reach and sweep them away. The keeper now made a third effort to fire a line nearer to the rigging where the men were, but a sudden gust of wind violently yawed it aside, and it failed to fall on the vessel. The keeper hauled it in and again fired it, but this time it broke in its flight. It appeared subsequently that had it dropped into the hands of the shipwrecked men, they were then too benumbed to haul the whip-line on board by its agency.

The keeper began to realize their helplessness, and felt that the desperate chances of a rescue were now narrowed down to a hard effort with the boat when the tide should fall. It was then about eight

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o'clock, and the condition of the surf made a launch impossible, but the wind had begun to backen, as old sailors say, into the westward, and the sea would abate somewhat on the ebb. The only course open was to wait. Finally, at about half past eleven in the forenoon, although the sea was running terribly, the life-saving crew could bear no longer the dreadful sight, seen through the thick-falling snow, of that cluster of human beings in the rigging near the crosstrees, with the surf bounding and crashing half-mast high beneath them, and the keeper gave the word to launch. He and his men had been drenched to the skin by the water breaking over them in their prolonged struggle to reach the wreck by the boat during the night, and their clothes, frozen upon them for many hours, literally clashed as they sprang to the oars. In a moment the boat was afloat and in conflict with the breakers. The men gave themselves to the contest with the sternest energy, but the current ran like a mill-race through a frightful sea, and despite their best endeavors they were swept to leeward of the wreck and had to put back to shore. After a few moments' rest another start was made, and this time the crew got so near as to lay hold of a line which was attached to the wreck, but the sea tore it from the hands that held it, and the boat had to put back again. Immediately upon landing the keeper gave the word for another attempt, and once more the indomitable crew headed the boat

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through the breakers. This time they succeeded in reaching the wreck, and held alongside until they got down four of the perishing men into the boat. With these they put back to the beach.

Two of the men were entirely unconscious, and as it was seen that no time must be lost in the endeavor to restore them, they were at once borne away to the station, Lieutenant Failing, a young man named Johnson, belonging to the revenue sloop, and Messrs. Goffigan and Coston, keeper and assistant keeper of the Smith's Island Lighthouse, being on hand to render this assistance. The life-saving crew meanwhile, without pausing, addressed themselves to the task of rescuing the four men still on the wreck. They were much exhausted, having been on the beach in their wet and frozen clothes without food or fire since midnight, and being further spent by several periods of severe physical toil; but they were also greatly encouraged by the success of their last endeavor, and rushed to the launch with renewed energies. It cost them a hard struggle to reach the vessel, but finally they got alongside and took off the remaining four men, with whom they safely returned to the shore.

The relief and exultation, which are the natural concomitants of a rescue, were alloyed in this case by a fatal incident. One of the wreckers, Richard Gordon, died from his long exposure about the time the boat landed. There was also another loss,

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Edward Hunter, the vessel's steward, having been washed overboard during the night. Of the seven men saved, two were brought to the station nearly dead, and it took five hours' constant labor to restore them to consciousness. After coming to, hot coffee was given them, and the ministrations of the crew were continued until their complete recovery was effected. It is needless to observe that all of the rescued men had suffered severely, and required much attention. Five of them remained at the station under succor for five days and one for a day.

The foregoing statement can give but a faint account of the difficulty, hardship, and extreme peril encountered by the life-saving crew in the noble work of the rescue. The lives of seven men were saved, against all probability, by their efforts. The loss of the other two can be referred only to the sad and strange fatuity which made them stay upon the wreck in the face of entreaty and warning, when sea and sky alike threatened them with destruction.

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XVIII

THE SCHOONER SALLIE W. KAY

THREE days later, on January 10, 1883, another wreck took place on the coast of the Fifth District, in the height of the same snowstorm — a storm which for violence and long continuance had no parallel in the annals of the year in that region. The vessel concerned was the three-masted, two-decked schooner Sallie W. Kay, of Somers Point, N. J., bound from Baltimore to Boston, with a cargo of coal, and having a crew of seven men, the captain included. At a quarter past six in the morning of the date named, she was sailing in the heart of the chaos of snow, the lookout on deck being unable to see hardly more than her length ahead, when she suddenly brought up hard and fast aground. The moment she struck, the watch below rushed up on deck, and all hands made haste to lower the yawl, hanging at the stern, and got it under the bow, ready for use in case it became necessary to leave the vessel; but before anything could be done the sea broke over the stern in a torrent, wrenched the boat from the tackles, and swept it out of sight. The next moment the crew had to fly aloft into the rigging. Sea after sea

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came charging over the stern, scattering, rending, and staving in all directions. Before long the top of the cabin was torn off, the hatches were burst open, and the water poured in and filled the schooner.

The peril on deck was so immediate that the sailors had sprung up into the rigging without having time to lower the sails, which remained set through the entire period of disaster. Another peril at once succeeded. The gradual filling of the vessel, added to the burden of her cargo, soon weighted her down so that she lay still; but for some time before this was accomplished she lifted and fell, pounding bottom so violently with her hull that with every jar the crew feared her masts would unstep and be thrown over the side. Threatened thus with danger of their lives, they descended from the rigging, between seas, and clambered beyond the bowsprit out on to the jib-boom. Here they clustered, straddling the spar in a row, and got some shelter from the gale and snow by loosing the flying jib and wrapping themselves as a group in its folds.

The schooner had struck upon a bar about 250 yards from shore, some five and a half miles north of the Ocean City Station (W. T. West, keeper), but save that they knew they were on the coast of Maryland, on which, as they were aware, there were life-saving stations, the sailors had no idea as to their locality or surroundings. It was fully an hour before the universal cloud of

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snow which whirled around them was rent asunder for a moment by a gust, and gave them a brief glimpse of the beach and a solitary dwelling to the northwest at some distance behind it. This transitory view, in addition to their knowledge of the existence of life-saving stations on the coast, immediately made them confident that help would soon reach them.

The house they saw beyond the beach was the dwelling of a fisherman named Howard, and a son of his, a boy, after a couple of hours had gone by, happened to descry the wreck in a lull of the storm and at once called his father. The high storm-tide was then bursting upon the beach, in some places running clear over it into the bay beyond, and the surf was cutting deep gullies across the sand, through which it jetted with torrent force, so that to notify the men at the Ocean City Station, six miles distant, as the fisherman at once desired to do, was for the present impracticable, travel being extremely perilous if not impossible. Under the circumstances Howard decided to wait until the tide abated. He could see the people on the wreck, and considered them in no immediate danger. At a little after nine o'clock the tide began to fall, relieving the beach of the flood which had surcharged it, and the boy was dispatched for the station. He had got so far upon his toilsome way as to have come abreast of the vessel in his passage when a tragic incident occurred.

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The sailors had maintained their weary and desolate watch upon the jib-boom for about three hours, with no sign as yet of coming relief, when one of them, a German, named Anton, his patience becoming exhausted, declared that he was going to swim ashore and fetch assistance. He was a young man, very muscular, and a powerful swimmer, and it appears had accomplished a similar feat before. The captain endeavored to dissuade him, knowing the danger of such an attempt and realizing the terrible condition of the sea he proposed to enter; but the young man was determined, and stripping off his boots and a part of his clothing, slid down the martingale, dropped into the water, and struck out boldly for the shore. At this time the captain, up on the jib-boom, saw the boy passing the wreck on his way to alarm the station. The courageous swimmer was meanwhile struggling powerfully with the sea. For a long time his comrades anxiously watched him, and saw him again and again nearly effect a landing, but borne back at each approach by the powerful undertow. At last he was swept away southward by the swift current, and gradually receded from view, battling with the swirling waters to the last.

After this gloomy catastrophe the dejected sailors were doubly resigned to wait until help should arrive. But for the snow, although they were more than a mile beyond the limits of the station patrol, they might have been discovered and rescued at

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an early hour. They were, however, invisible even at the extremity of the beat, which, moreover, the condition of the beach made it impossible to attain. The patrolman who had started out from the station on his watch at four o'clock in the morning, after an exhausting trudge of a couple of hours, was unable to make more than a mile and a half of his four miles' allotment, and was forced by the ever-increasing peril of his march to retreat to the station, where he did not arrive until eight o'clock. His way had been through a storm of blinding snow and spray, which rendered vision impossible beyond a few yards. The beach, as before stated, was trenched with gullies, through which, with every rush of the sea, the water drove as though forced from an engine. In low places the sands were flooded, and the patrolman waded hip-deep. Where the water did not reach was the snow, and this lay twenty inches deep on a level and up to the waist or over the head in the drifts. Under these conditions patrolling was judged impracticable, as even with the greatest toil and danger the men could accomplish only a short distance, and then could see nothing, and the best that could be done was to keep a vigilant watch from the lookout of the station.

As the forenoon wore on there was a temporary lull in the snowstorm and the horizons opened, so that by eleven o'clock one of the station crew caught sight of the distant schooner. The station

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was at once roused to activity, and Keeper West ordered out the apparatus. Realizing, however, the impossibility of hauling it by hand over such a beach, he dispatched a man for a pair of oxen, no horses being available. Owing to distance and the encumbered road there was some delay in bringing up the cattle, so that the start for the wreck with the load of apparatus could not be made until noon.

The journey, as may readily be imagined, was terrible. The men buckled to with the oxen, tugging the loaded mortar cart, with its thousand pounds' weight of apparatus, over the snow-clogged, torn, and flooded beach, and against the onset of the gale. Midway between the station and the wreck they met the little messenger toiling toward them, and their anxiety to get to the scene of disaster rose to fever heat when they learned that the sailors had been driven to the jib-boom for safety. Every muscle and sinew was now strained to renewed exertion, and at length, at a quarter past two, the party arrived in front of the vessel.

The men were dreadfully exhausted and paused a few moments to recover breath and strength; but the spectacle of the wretched sailors perched upon the jib-boom of the wreck, with the waters coiling and leaping below them, made their pause of short continuance, and it was but a little space before the mortar cart was unloaded and the gun trained. At the first shot the line flew over the

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foretopmast stay, and the bight slipped down within reach of the sailors, who at once began to haul in. They were so numb and cramped with their long confinement upon the spar, beaten by the cold gale and snow, with only the shelter of a drenched and frozen sail, that it was with some difficulty they could gather in the whip-line, which the current bellied far to southward as it was paid out from the beach. But before long the lines were set up and the breeches-buoy rigged on, and in half an hour from the time of the arrival of the station crew the six men were safely landed. Ten residents of Ocean City, including the local signal service operator, having heard the rumor of the disaster, had followed the life-saving crew to the scene of action and rendered good service in hauling the sailors ashore.

The rescued men were in an almost dying condition, and no time was lost in setting out with them on the toilsome way to the station. The keeper and citizens took them in charge, while the crew loaded up the apparatus in the mortar cart and followed after. It was with difficulty that the poor seamen could walk, they were so cold and exhausted. Fortunately, the signal service operator, Mr. James Crawford, had come to the scene in his wagon, in which three men at a time were conveyed alternately, while those who walked in their turn were supported and helped forward by the keeper and citizens. The plan adopted was for two

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of the latter to get a sailor between them, with his arms around their necks, and thus half carry, half urge him onward. Despite this aid, the sailors, long before the station was reached, wanted to sit down, they were so far gone, and, left to themselves, would undoubtedly have given up and died upon the beach. Under the circumstances, the march with these cripples through the slush of sand and the snowdrifts was painful and slow, but it was indomitably maintained and ended at nearly six o'clock in the evening by arrival at the shelter of the station. Once there, the worst was over. The frozen garments of the sailors were stripped from them and exchanged for such dry clothes as the slender stores of the surfmen afforded, and by the aid of plentiful hot coffee and food, the poor men were before long restored and put to bed. They were kept under succor at the station for two days.

The first man landed from the wreck told the life-saving crew of the loss of the sailor Anton. Two days afterward his body was found tossing in the surf upon the beach sixteen miles below the scene of disaster. It is evident that his loss must be charged to his rash though gallant effort to swim ashore, and that his life would have been saved had he waited like his comrades.

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XIX

THE STEAM TUG PROTECTION

THE wreck of the steam tug Protection took place on the 13th of November, 1883, during a memorable storm on Lake Michigan. The tug was owned by the Vessel Owner's Towing Company of Chicago, Ill. On the 10th of November, at seven o'clock in the evening, she started from Saint Joseph, Mich., with the schooner Arab in tow, intending to take the latter vessel to the west shore of the lake in the vicinity of Racine. The Arab had run ashore near Saint Joseph several days previously and had just been pulled off the beach by the tug. She was loaded with green hemlock lumber, and as she was leaking badly from her recent disaster, she had two steam-pumps forward to keep her free. On board the Protection were the captain, pilot, engineer, two firemen, a deck-hand, a cook, and a wrecking master — eight men in all. The people on the Arab consisted of her captain, mate, steward, three seamen, together with two engineers and two firemen who were in charge of the steam-pumps — the whole number being ten.

At the time of starting there was bright moon-

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light, with light airs and an easy swell of the sea from the westward. The night continued calm and splendid, and the two vessels held their course west by north across the lake without incident until about four o'clock in the morning, when suddenly the people on the tug heard cries from the schooner, which was about 500 feet in the rear, and saw commotion on her decks. The next sight was her sailors rushing aft, while the schooner rolled over and plunged down by the head, sinking in a half perpendicular position, and lying aslant in the water, with only about ten feet of her port-quarter sticking up. To this part of the vessel the sailors were presently seen clinging, making the night echo with their cries. In explanation of this astounding spectacle, it came out subsequently that only one of the two steam-pumps on board had been put in use, one having been found sufficient to keep the vessel free. For some reason, however, it became difficult to keep steam on the pump, and a movement was made to put the other one in operation. In the mean time the leak gained on the schooner beyond the calculation of those on board, and before steam could be got up on the second pump, the catastrophe happened, the weight of the two pumps forward aiding to send the bow of the vessel down.

No time was lost on board the tug in moving to the relief of the schooner's crew. The pilot instantly rang to stop and back the vessel; and

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now ensued another misfortune. In backing, the propeller caught the tow-line and twirled it up like a reel until it stopped and disabled the engine. One can imagine the general amazement. The tug had all at once become perfectly helpless, and could no longer move to the assistance of the schooner's crew. In this exigency a small boat was launched from her with speed, and rowed to the rescue. It was found on coming up alongside the wreck that one of her men, William Kelly, an engineer of the pumps, had been drowned. He had been standing forward when the schooner made her lurch for the depths, and (probably crushed by the overturning pumps) had gone down with her bows. Four of the men, clinging to the unsubmerged port-quarter, were at once taken to the tug in the boat, which presently returned and delivered the other five.

It is not without some show of reason that the idea of perfidy is attached to the sea. There are times when it seems as if the elements lie in wait to take advantage. Up to the moment when the tug had fouled her propeller with the tow-line, she had been riding through the light swells of a sea rich with moonlight, in a gentle and scarce felt western wind. The weather could not have been finer. But no sooner did the propeller become snarled up with the line so that it could not move, and the vessel lay helplessly drifting before the sea, than the wind began to blow stiffly and the swells to rise. The men on board, seeing this sinister change,

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fell to work at once to free the propeller from its tangle, and for four hours steadily worked at it. At the end of that time the sea had grown so high that they were forced to stop. By ten o'clock in the forenoon it had become a swollen ocean, before which the vessel drove inertly, and the wind had gone to the northwest and was blowing hard.

Amidst this gathering tempest the tug still rode splendidly, although deprived of the use of her engines. At about eleven o'clock (November 11) a large propeller, the H. C. Akeley of Grand Haven, Mich., laden with corn, and having a crew of eighteen men, surged up on the horizon astern, and in response to the steam whistle of the Protection came plowing down the stormy waste and took her in tow, heading about north, or toward the Manitou Islands. The wind was constantly increasing. By the afternoon it had become a fearful gale, the records of the signal office at Grand Haven giving its velocity at fifty-two miles an hour. The sea was also tremendous, and the Akeley began to make very bad weather. She rolled heavily, and it was evident from her motions that she had shifted her cargo. With every roll the seas washed clean over her. At about seven o'clock in the evening her steering gear became disabled, her engines stopped, and she fell off helplessly, broadside to the sea. Sail was made upon her, but the wind blew away her mainsail and mizzen, and she could only drift like her consort, the tug, which still con-

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tinued in her tow. At four o'clock the next morning (November 12) one of her boats was swept overboard, and about ten o'clock in the forenoon her smokestack toppled over and was lost. All this time the tug hung on to her tow-line, but by swinging off to leeward, so as to keep her head to the wind, she rode the seas much better than the Akeley. The gale moderated somewhat during the afternoon, and the vessels continued to drift. At about six o'clock in the evening the Protection found that the line was apparently unwound from her wheel and that her engines would work, and supposing that she was then about thirty miles from South Haven, cast off from her tow and started for Grand Haven, the intention being to coal up and then return to the relief of the Akeley. She ran about ten minutes, when it was discovered that the rope still clogged the wheel and the engine would work only to back her. The only resource was to let her drift as before, which she did all night. In this way she approached the land, and at about nine o'clock the next morning (November 13) she dropped her anchor about half a mile off the town of Saugatuck, on the eastern shore of Lake Michigan.

A great throng of people soon swarmed upon the beach, summoned by the screaming of her whistle. She lay some distance north of the harbor piers, under a gloomy sky of driving cloud, riding well, though pitching and tossing fearfully in

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the tremendous sea. Every other instant her decks and the wind-blown figures of her men were shown to the excited crowd as she rolled. A weft of awning, fastened to an oar stuck upright in her bow, streamed and flapped in the gale as a signal of distress, and the screech of her whistles was never still. It appeared as if nothing could be done for her under the surrounding conditions. The state of the sea prevented any available boat from getting out to her. Her entrance into the passage, forty feet wide between the piers, was equally forbidden, as the harbor mouth was barred by a mass of monstrous breakers. After a hasty conference on the part of some of the leading citizens present, it was decided to send for the nearest life-saving crew.

This was at Grand Haven, but a telegram to that station soon brought the news that the men were at a wreck nine miles to the southward. Another dispatch was then sent to the keeper of the remoter station at St. Joseph, over sixty miles distant, asking him to come to the assistance of the tug. Upon receiving it, the keeper (William L. Stevens) attempted to open communication with the district superintendent at Grand Haven, but found that he had gone with the crew to the other wreck, and at once decided upon responding to the call from Saugatuck, despite the unusual distance.

After a couple of hours of intense activity, arrangements were effected by Keeper Stevens with

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the agent of the Chicago and West Michigan Railway for the transportation of the life-saving apparatus. A telegram was then sent to Saugatuck announcing the coming of the life-savers. The station was left in charge of surfman No. 1, and the keeper and the remaining seven men of the crew loaded the wreck ordnance and other appliances, together with the mortar cart, into a boat for ferriage across the river. The passage was attended with serious risk, for a heavy sea from the outside was bursting into the stream, making it rough and dangerous. As a measure of safety a line was run across, and by this means the boat with its load was pulled over. Upon landing the cart was loaded up and trundled with all speed to the depot. There were but ten minutes to spare before the time for the starting of the train, and all hands fell to work to unload the mortar cart and take it off its wheels, so as to get it into a baggage car, no flat car being available. At 12.55 all were aboard and the train raced out of the depot on its way.

By three o'clock in the lowering afternoon, the life-saving party reached Richmond, on the banks of the Kalamazoo River, having run a distance of fifty-one miles. The tug Ganges was awaiting them, sent by the people of Saugatuck to transport them thither. In a few minutes the apparatus was lugged on board and the boat steamed off. The distance was thirteen miles down a bending stream, so shallow that several times during the

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voyage the tug rubbed bottom hard. By five o'clock in the afternoon the life-saving party arrived, and landed near the lighthouse, proceeding thence with the mortar cart and its load to the beach abreast of the wreck. The latter was still riding at anchor. Two attempts had been made during the afternoon by fishermen and sailors to get out to her in a large Mackinac fishing-boat, but were baffled by the violence of the wind and sea. She was beyond shot-range, and nothing could be done for the present except to keep the apparatus ready for immediate use in case she should part her hawser and drift nearer shore. It was considered that so long as her anchor held she was safe.

At six o'clock the wind hauled to the northwest; flurries of snow thickened the air, and there were signs of deepening tempest. The growing force of the storm sharpened the vigilance of the watchers on the beach, and the time passed until nine o'clock, when all at once the whistles on the tug broke out with shrill continuity in the distress signal. It was the token that the vessel had begun to drag her anchor. To the men on board this was a supreme moment. They had judged, amidst all anxiety, that they were in reasonable security so long as the tug held to her moorings. It was now evident that the hull beneath them would soon be in the rending and shattering breakers, and giving themselves up for lost they shook hands all round and bade one another good-by.

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On the beach it went like wild-fire that the tug had begun to move. The keeper and his men saw that her drift was to the southward, and that she would fetch up, if anywhere, south of the south pier. It was therefore necessary to cross the river, and the apparatus was at once hauled to the bank, where Captain Kendrick of the government tug Graham received it on board and transported it to the other side. There a force of excited citizens aided the life-saving crew to land and drag it to the beach, abreast of which the drifting vessel was expected to strand. Their aid was of great service, for the way was of the roughest description. A large pond on the inside of the beach compelled the landing of the apparatus on the south pier, which was formed of crib-work; that is, compartments filled to the top with rough stones. And these being uncovered, the crowd had to overlay with a track for the wheels of the mortar cart, which they improvised by tearing up the plank walk made for the use of the lightkeeper. The cart was thus hauled along the pier until the beach was reached, which, as usual with the lake beaches, was perfectly corduroyed with driftwood of every description. Every one that could get at the drag-ropes took a hold, and the cart went joggling and plunging, drawn by main force, over the wild strew of obstructions. The scene in the windy darkness and whirling snow, with the rough figures of the toilers, the monstrous lights and

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shadows made by the lanterns, and the roar of gale and sea, can be only faintly imagined. The road was so nearly impracticable that, despite herculean labor, progress was slow; and it was fortunate that when about half the destined distance was achieved, a way considerably clearer of obstacles was found near the sand-hills, thus enabling the haulers to make better time. The distance from the south pier to the locality at which it was foreseen the wreck would come in was about half a mile, and the best part of an hour was consumed in reaching it. It was a place where the beach was about 100 feet wide, rough with stumps and thickly strewn with logs and driftwood. Backing it was a rampart of white sand-bluffs, rising abruptly, and crested with a dense growth of pines and underbrush. Several fires kindled on the beach by the life-saving party were soon straining in the wind, and the white fronts of the sand-banks, acting as reflectors, threw the glare of the flames far out upon the mass of waters. The same weird light aided the operations of the life-saving crew as they hurriedly got the wreck-gun and appliances ready for action.

Meanwhile the tug had passed the piers and continued to drift on her southward course, gradually working in nearer the excited congregation the lighted beach revealed to those on board. She drifted quartering, or half stern foremost, and her whole company were clustered at her bows, watching

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the shore. They had not known until now of the presence of the life-saving crew, and the first hope they had felt since the dragging of the anchor reanimated them as they saw in the vast fluctuations of light from the beach fires the files of the life-savers and their allies plunging forward down the sands with the mortar cart behind them. They were thus braced, as they entered their worst danger, with the consciousness that organized effort was on foot for their assistance. The storm appeared to augment as they approached the surf. It is certain that the snow fell and whirled around them in increased profusion. The tug lifted and dropped like a dead hulk on the surge of an awful sea, staggering and quivering as she drifted under the shocks of the battering wind. Presently, when about 200 yards from the beach, she struck the outer bar with a great crash. The sea at once made a clean sweep over her. She continued to rise and fall, striking the bar with shivering shocks, while the floods burst across her from end to end, smashing and rending. In a few moments the pilot-house was broken in, the doors of the engine-room and the cabin were beaten down, and the hull was half full of water. One of the firemen, William Grace, who was standing aft, near the fantail, was swept overboard, and instantly perished. The tug continued to pound upon the bar, slowly working over, sea after sea sheeting across her. In the midst of all the hurly-burly, the spectators on shore

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were astonished to see a young fellow get up quietly out of the surf, and walk coolly, streaming with water, to a neighboring fire. It was one of the sailors from the tug. He had put on a life-preserver, plunged overboard, and by one chance in a million reached the shore.

Before long the vessel had pounded over the bar into deeper water, and at length brought up with her stern solid in the sand. The men on board then slackened away the line which had been bent to her cable to give her scope to ride by, and she swung around with her stern to the sea, which continued now and then to shoot over her. The wreck-gun was soon trained upon her, and the shot flew, carrying the line across her stern. The line, however, parted near the shot, and before the men on board could seize it a sea washed it overboard. A second shot was immediately fired, and the line fell directly amidships, where it was caught. It was now about ten o'clock. By half-past ten the hawser and hauling-lines had been drawn out and set up between the vessel and the shore, the breeches-buoy had been rigged on, and the hauling home of the men from the wreck began.

The work was attended with no common difficulties. The hawser and the tail-block of the whip-line had both been made fast to the timber-head or pawl-post, so that they interfered with each other, and although thirty-five or forty men were

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pulling on the whip-line, it worked very hard. The tug, moreover, was rolling heavily and continually forging ahead, which compelled the life-saving crew to constantly shift the crotch and readjust the hawser. As, despite incessant exertion, the hawser could not be wholly kept from sagging, the convulsive roll of the hull alone being sufficient to keep it from being made taut, it followed that the men in the breeches-buoy were more or less dragged home through the water, though with such rapidity that, as the keeper testified, they left a streak of foam behind them. During the whole operation the snow came down in such a blinding whirl that the tug was nearly hidden from view, and the weather was bitterly cold. The men landed from the wreck, and the men nearest the water landing them had their clothing freeze upon them at once at the first contact with the air. During the rescue Keeper Stevens and two of his men, taking the advance post of danger in order to be of the most service, stood waist-deep in the surf at the hauling-lines, and immediately upon coming out their clothes froze stiff upon them.

It was half past ten when the first man was hauled ashore. At half past eleven the last one of the fifteen on board was safely landed.

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XX

THE BARKENTINE ELMINA

A WRECK took place on the 8th of January, 1884, near the Long Beach Station, Fourth District, New Jersey. The vessel was the barkentine Elmina of Salscombe, England. Her complete destruction, together with the loss of her entire crew, obscured her record at the time; but it was subsequently ascertained that she was bound from Natal, Brazil, to New York, with a cargo of sugar in bags, and that her crew consisted of eight men. The following narrative gives the circumstances of her shipwreck so far as they could be established by the sworn testimony obtained upon official investigation.

At nightfall on the 8th of January a violent east-southeast gale was blowing on the New Jersey coast, the rain was coming down in torrents, and the surf was raging. At about half past seven in the evening two brothers, Charles and Thomas Crane, who lived with their father a few hundred yards south of the Long Beach Station, went down upon the beach to haul their fishing skiff out of reach of the tide, and while so engaged saw through the wind-blown deluge the red light of a vessel out

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in the dusk on the sea. It disappeared almost immediately, and the young men concluded from its proximity to the shore that the craft to which it belonged had struck upon the bar, which was about 200 yards from shore. One of them accordingly ran to the life-saving station to give the alarm, while the other hastened home to inform his father, that the team which the latter was under engagement to furnish upon occasion for station use might be harnessed and ready for the call.

The keeper of the station, James Sprague, at once sent for the horses, which in a few minutes were hitched on to the mortar cart. The two patrolmen out had returned to the station just about the time the keeper had been notified of the wreck, and the entire crew, therefore, together with Mr. Crane and his two sons, started away with the load of wreck ordnance and apparatus.

In a short time the party arrived opposite the vessel, which was abreast of a point three quarters of a mile south of the station. The tide was just turning on the flood, and the surf was already so high and dangerous as to preclude boat service. The rain came driven on the strong gale right from the sea, thickening now and then into violent rain-squalls which made the dark air impenetrable. Nothing could be seen beyond the distance of a few feet while these squalls lasted, but in the intervals the vessel could be descried 200 yards away, apparently on the outer side of the bar, her

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bows headed toward the beach, her foresail and foretopsail set, and looking, through the downpour, like some large phantom, dark against a deeper darkness. A dim spot of light, low down, vaguely indicated a lamp in her cabin. Some change in her shape shortly after the arrival of the crew upon the ground denoted the clewing up of the foretopsail. The foresail remained set to the last.

No time was lost in beginning operations for the rescue. A red Coston light was burned to let the men on board know that help was at hand, and a cheer, apparently from all hands, responded to the crimson blaze of the signal. Mr. Crane was sent back with his horses to the station for the surf-boat in case a possibility of using it should arise. It being still low water, the apparatus was taken as near the surf as possible, and the gear arranged for setting up. The crew were ranged on the crest of the beach, four or five feet from the water. Before them was a towering rabble of breakers, through which a strong current swept to the southward. Behind them darkened away a level beach, 300 yards wide, ending in a ridge of beach hills.

The wreck-gun was speedily placed in position, aim was taken with the aid of the dim light visible on the vessel's hull, and the shot-line flew. There was no doubt that it reached its destination, for in hauling upon it a little, the men felt it sawing across something; but this sense of contact

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soon ceased, and the line came away, and was hauled back to the beach.

A second and a third shot were fired without result. The fourth shot carried the line over the vessel, but it was concluded to have fallen out of reach, as it was not hauled upon. It was now about half past ten, and by this time it was evident that the ship's company were all aloft, for the heavy seas were visibly tumbling in huge floods over the hull. The rain had somewhat slackened, and the vessel could be descried sharply careened to the northward, her bows to the shore, and her head appearing to be settling. It was a matter for general wonder that she did not work in over the bar nearer the shore. With the wind, sea, and tide all urging her, and all tremendous, she should have driven so near the beach that the rescue of her men would have been swift and easy. The reason was subsequently suggested to the officer who conducted the official investigation, by an examination of the relics of the wreck. The probability, amounting to a moral certainty, is that upon nearing the bar the crew of the barkentine committed the fatal error of dropping the anchor. In this case, the vessel would be held, unable to move forward, an object for the sea to beat to pieces.

Between this time and midnight the patrols from the Ship Bottom Station to the north and Bond's Station to the south appeared successively on the beach and were at once sent back to summon the

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crews of their respective stations. Keeper Sprague and his men, deeply troubled at the disheartening conditions under which they were working, were yet stung to anxious effort by the consciousness that the rising tide would soon drive them back to the very beach hills, when with 300 yards added to the distance between them and the vessel effort would be impossible. The gun was therefore again carefully trained upon the wreck, aimed at the foretopsail yard, and fired. An instant after, above the stormy roar of the surf, a faint cheer came from the sea. This denoted that the people on board had caught the line.

The life-saving crew at once fell to work like men inspired. Quickly, yet with extreme care, Keeper Sprague strictly superintending the operation lest any mistake should be made, they bent on the tail of the whip-block to the shot-line, widely spreading apart the double line of the whip to prevent the two sections from twisting together as it went from them, hauled off into the darkness by the men of the barkentine. The whip-line crept away slowly and steadily, nearly all of it being taken from the reel before the cessation of its movement denoted that the block had reached the vessel.

Under the hard conditions of the hauling it took the sailors in the rigging an hour to get the whip-line out. Midnight had arrived, and just

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then Keeper Marshall of the Bond's Station came upon the beach with six of his men.

An appalling incident now occurred. Although negative in character, it was at once recognized as savagely sinister, and broke upon the minds of the men with the startling force of catastrophe.

The hawser had been bent on to the whip-line to be hauled out to the wreck, and after waiting a reasonable time to allow the tail-block to be made fast by the sailors, to whom, being invisible, signaling was impossible, both life-saving crews manned the whip and began to pull away. Suddenly they found the whip-line tense in their hands, with not an inch of give to it. Startled at the unexpected resistance, they strained violently upon the line, but without avail. Instead of circulating through the block, taking out the hawser in its passage, as was expected, it remained stiffly drawn under the tension of the haulers, like a rope made fast at the end. Under the circumstances, hardly any occurrence could have been more dreadful.

The terror of the incident seemed intensified by a degree of quietude which had strangely fallen upon the scene. The wind had suddenly died away to almost a calm. This cessation of the airy tumult induced a sense of stillness, despite the noises of the surf and sea. All effort to start the whip-line had ceased. The men could only stand in a sort of stupor, gazing out into the roaring gloom at that spectre, the mere shadow

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or rough sketch of a vessel, which could be seen through the quietly descending screen of rain, with her masts sharply slanting to the northward from the dark riot of waters on her hull. This was viewed with the awful feeling that in all probability there was no help for the wretched beings clinging invisibly to those black spars.

Presently Keeper Sprague, following the long recession of a sea, rushed down into the edge of the surf as near the wreck as he could get, gave a pealing hail, and asked if they could not clear the line. In the following silence, it was thought by some on the crest of the beach that a faint voice came from the wreck. Of this there is no certainty nor indeed likelihood.

The wind now went to the southwest, backed quickly to the southeast, and blew again with frightful violence. The register at the nearest signal service station gave its velocity at sixty-eight miles an hour. Driven before it was a flood of rain mingled with volleys of scattered spray from the breakers. The surf was rapidly swelling with the rising tide, and added its menace to the growing fury.

At one o'clock Keeper Truax and six men from the Ship Bottom Station arrived upon the beach, together with three men from Beach Haven. The whole group consisted of twenty-eight men. All hands now manned the whip-line in another effort to make it work free. It was useless. From the

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first, every known means had been employed to clear it, but without avail.

By this time the tide was mounting to full flood and the surf had become horrible. Wind, wave, rain, spray, were all commingled in a vast and disorderly onset of tempest, deafening, blinding, drenching, battering, in a tremendous darkness lit only by livid flashes from the breakers. The great seas were now bounding with terrific uproar upon the crest of the beach, where the crews were gathered, bursting far and wide in sheeting foam, and spreading back upon the lower levels to the barrier of sand-hills. Every other minute the men were in imminent peril. Frequently they were washed from their feet, regaining their foothold in the seething flood by desperate struggle. They might have retreated to the beach hills for safety; but faithful to their conceived duty, they braced themselves, hoping that so long as they kept near the surf they might yet be able to pull from it some struggling sailor. It was felt that the end was near. Through the dreadful chaos of the tempest, the vague shape of the vessel could be half seen, careened northward, swarmed over with breakers, the masts almost dipping in the sea. It was evident that the hull must soon be smashed to pieces under the weight of the avalanches flung upon it, and no praise is too great for the indomitable men who held their perilous ground so stanchly

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obdurate in the resolution to save what dying wretches chance might sweep near the shore. The beach at length became so overswept that to maintain a foothold on it was impossible. Even then, when the necessity of retreat was forced upon them, the yearning to rescue any castaways that might get near land kept them from falling back to the beach hills. There was an old wreck, the remnant of a hull, on the beach near by, upon which the sand had gradually accumulated, forming a sort of huge mound or hummock. To this elevation they betook themselves in a body. The surf-boat was there as a means of escape, and they were still near the breakers, which momentarily hurled sheeting seas of foam around the base of their place of outlook. From this post they still kept watch upon the sea.

About three o'clock there was heard through the deafening tumult a faint but ominous crashing of timbers. Every eye was strained upon the gloom. The vessel had disappeared. At the same moment both parts of the whip-line snapped near the shore. All was over.

In the forlorn hope that some of the men from the wreck might still be washed near shore, the brave group held their position. They remained until nearly four o'clock. By this time the tide, which was extraordinary, had reached its full height; the whole beach back to the very hills was covered with a furious flood, which was tear-

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ing its way through the interspaces into the bay behind; and the old hull on which the crews were gathered, overswept by the seas, began to rock and surge dangerously in its bed. It was as useless as perilous for them to remain longer, and launching the surf-boat they gained the beach hills with some difficulty, where they stayed until seven o'clock in the morning.

At about that hour the day broke drearily over the miserable scene of shipwreck. The ghastly light revealed a barren waste of plunging waters, from which a shapeless fragment of wreck protruded blackly, and an expanse of beach studded with salt pools left by the ebbing tide, and strewn with fragments of wreck — life-buoys, buckets, and the like — which the sea had washed ashore. The ship's name was discovered from being painted on some of these. It has been mentioned that the barkentine, as was subsequently learned, had a cargo of sugar in bags, and it is an item of curious interest that among the great mass of wreck débris of all sorts, widely scattered over the sands for miles, not one of these bags was ever found. The sugar, of course, had dissolved and washed out of its envelopes, and the whole beach smelled of it for days afterward, but there was not a trace of the gunny-cloth which had covered it.

Some time elapsed before it was discovered that the number of the lost crew was eight. On the day

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after the wreck five of their bodies were found, — three of them near the Ship Bottom Station, one near the Harvey's Cedars Station, and one near the Loveladies Island Station, — all to the northward of the place of wreck.

It is probable, as already suggested, that the dropping of the barkentine's anchor as she neared the bar, thus preventing her from driving sheer ashore before wind and sea, was the primary cause of this fatal disaster. The immediate cause was obviously the failure of the whip-line to work in the block, and this failure was a standing mystery to the life-saving crews. But three days afterward, on the 11th of January, Mr. Joseph K. Ridgway, an agent for the underwriters, was at work with his men digging out the remnants of the wreck which had been washed ashore, when he came upon the foremast and yard ; and upon clearing away the sand found the whip-line, readily recognizable by the red yarn woven into one of the strands. The secret was at once laid bare. Instead of the whip being attached by the tail of the block, both parts of the line were found to have been gathered together, wound around the yard, and tied twice. Of course, in this position the line was perfectly immovable. At first it seemed incredible that sailors, who know so well the use of a tail-block, should voluntarily have done such a thing as make fast the line below it. That their action was optional, however, appeared the next day upon the further dis-

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covery of the block, perfectly intact, with a piece of its own proper rope still in it. The inability of the life-saving crews to proceed with the operation for sending out the breeches-buoy to the relief of the sailors was thus fully accounted for. On the other hand, the conduct of these hapless men in destroying their only chance for deliverance may be conjecturally explained with reference to their situation. The vessel lay canted over on her starboard side, with tons of water momentarily thrown upon her hull. From these incessant fierce burials there was but one place of refuge. This was up in the rigging, whither there is no doubt the sailors betook themselves at an early stage of the disaster. They clung to masts slanting giddily in darkness over the awful tumbling of the seas, swayed to and fro and rocking in their steps with every convulsive roll of the hull, and threatening every minute to topple down. Under the horrors of their condition the men must have become quite unmanned, and it is probable that when the whip-line reached them, afraid that the mast might fall at any moment, and unable through terror to await their rescue when there was a chance, however desperate, of at once gaining the shore, they solidly fastened the line and attempted to come in on it, sailor-fashion, hand over hand. This view is confirmed by the fact that beyond the cheer which greeted the arrival of the whip-line no voice was heard from the vessel during the couple of hours before she went to pieces.

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Had they attached the whip by the tail-block and nerved themselves to remain on the swaying spar, a few minutes would have sufficed to bring them safely to land by the breeches-buoy. As it was, exhaustion must have soon overtaken them, and they doubtless dropped from the line one by one into the sea.

It will be seen how little is known of this melancholy disaster. The sorrowful story is resolved into the fact that eight men perished in darkness and silence, amidst a doleful monotony of tempest, without availing themselves of the means of escape the life-saving crews had faithfully and ably supplied. All else that can be told relates only to the efficiency of the latter; and it is their record that despite the darkness and the gale, they laid the shot-line three times across the wreck, and established the conditions of rescue. It is not their fault that these conditions were not taken advantage of. The tragic fate of the poor sailors has the offset of the skill brought into play to save them, and the noble constancy which watched over them to the end through a long night of hardship and peril.

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XXI

THE BARK CHARLIE HICKMAN

THE wreck of the British bark Charlie Hickman, of Saint John, N. B., occurred on the night of the 22d of December, 1884, in the vicinity of the Forge River Station (Third District), coast of Long Island, N. Y., about twenty-five miles to the eastward of Fire Island. It is noteworthy that the British steamship Oliveto had stranded in the same locality the day previous, the bark striking about three quarters of a mile to the eastward of her. The Oliveto's crew were fortunately all saved. An account of their rescue appears under its appropriate date (December 21) in the record of Services of Life-Saving Crews for 1884. The steamer subsequently got off. By the disaster to the Charlie Hickman one life was unfortunately lost and the bark was a total wreck. She registered 900 tons, and had a crew of sixteen all told. She was on a voyage from Liverpool to New York, laden with cannel coal and empty petroleum barrels. The weather had been boisterous for several days, and on the night of the wreck it was still stormy and thick, with a southerly gale and an ugly sea. The eight o'clock watch

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of the Forge River Station had just been set, and the two patrolmen had scarcely more than separated on their respective beats along the shore, to the east and the west, when the man bound east observed through the mist a dim light ahead of him, apparently a mile or so away to the southeast. He quickened his pace, and soon discovered that it was the red or port sidelight of a vessel which had evidently just grounded on the outlying bar, 300 or 400 yards from the shore. He promptly flashed a red Coston light to notify those on board that their situation was understood, and then ran back to report.

At the station he found all in bustle and activity, and the men were about ready to start with the beach apparatus. It seems the keeper, Sidney Smith, had seen the red glare of the signal, as he lingered at the door after the two men had departed; and supposing that it was an answer to a signal from some people yet on board the Oliveto, who had become alarmed for their safety and wished to come ashore, he had instantly summoned the rest of the crew from their beds and ordered the breeches-buoy gear out, well knowing that the state of the surf and the strong current alongshore would render futile any effort at boat service. The lines were still swollen and stiff from use at the steamer the day before, and a part of the gear had been left in an ox cart which the men had employed on that occasion in con-

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junction with the regular apparatus cart. Upon setting out, the beach was found in such bad condition, owing to the high storm-tide, that even with the aid of oxen the drawing of both carts was slow and tedious work. Before going far, therefore, a halt was made, the gun and a few other articles necessary in establishing communication were put back upon the service cart, and the men pushed forward with that alone, leaving the rest with one man, to follow as fast as the shambling gait of the oxen would permit. Even in the face of these difficulties, everything was on the ground soon after half past eight. The night was black as pitch, rain was falling in torrents, and but for the dim light seen for a short time on the vessel, and which served as a beacon, it would have been next to impossible to locate her. But the light soon went out, and she appeared as a dark object barely outlined against the scarcely less dark background of sky and water. A site was quickly chosen on the highest eligible ground to arrange the gear on, and the wreck-gun was just ready to fire when, louder than the roar of the surf, a tremendous crash was heard, and soon afterwards fragments of wreckage and empty barrels came washing up. It was plain the vessel was going to pieces. This was about nine o'clock. A maximum charge of powder, with the gun at extreme elevation, sent the shot-line whizzing seaward, and then followed a painful pause until it was learned that

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the shot was effectual. The strong easterly current had swept the bight of the line as soon as it fell far to the eastward, and the first indication the beachmen had that the line was on board was its bodily movement to windward, showing that it was being hauled upon. The men were much encouraged by the splendid accuracy of their aim, for it was almost more than they had dared hope for under such circumstances. The whip was at once attached, and then followed another period of inaction.

In the mean time the men who had been landed from the stranded steamer the day before came up, under the lead of the boatswain; also a party of four fishermen, and Mr. Ellison Bishop of Moriches, agent of the underwriters. By these arrivals the beach party now numbered upwards of thirty men. While waiting for the people on the bark to haul the whip off, some of the surfmen kindled a fire with staves of the oil barrels washed ashore, drenching them with kerosene, a can of which had been brought from the station. The blaze served the twofold purpose of encouraging the castaways and enabling those on the shore to work to better advantage. As soon as the latter were satisfied by hauling back on both parts of the whip that the tail-block connected with it was fast on board, the life-savers bent the hawser on and hauled it off. The latter was then set up, the breeches-buoy was rigged, and the preparations

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were complete. Now came the work of rescue. The buoy went out in good shape, and after waiting a reasonable time without receiving any signal, the keeper gave the word to haul it back. The beachmen drew it rapidly shoreward, and as it came into view they had the satisfaction of finding a man in it. The poor fellow had come almost the entire distance through a frightful turmoil of surf and wreckage, and it was little short of a miracle that he was alive. As soon as he could speak he told in a few words the situation of his shipmates. They were lashed to a fragment of the wreck — the stern. The vessel had heeled offshore and filled soon after she struck. Her falling over had allowed the sea full sweep, so that she quickly burst open, and the crashing heard by the life-savers was when the fore and main masts went by the board and she broke in two, the forward part disappearing almost entirely and rapidly going to pieces. Fortunately the people had taken refuge aft before the crash came. As the wreck gradually settled in the sand they found it necessary to lash themselves to avoid being washed off. The man begged his rescuers for God's sake not to set the hawser any tauter, or it would give way and all would be lost. It was fast to the stump of the mizzenmast, and the angle at which the wreck lay offshore brought the rope in contact with the rail and threatened to chafe it asunder. After the buoy had made two or three trips, the mate of

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the bark managed to secure a small bull's-eye lantern, which he used thereafter as a signal to the shore in working the gear. It was doubtless due to his resolute coolness that the people were not utterly demoralized. He superintended the placing of the men in the buoy, and by his good judgment aided the life-savers very greatly.

Two additional men had now arrived, the patrols of the adjacent stations opposite Moriches and Smith's Point. They had suspected something amiss from not meeting any one from the Forge River Station, and pushed on until they reached the scene of the wreck. The buoy was kept going as fast as the difficulties of the situation would permit, some trips bringing two men. It was necessary to be very cautious; and as it was unsafe, as before shown, to set the hawser more than hand-taut, the poor creatures were literally dragged under water almost the entire distance from the wreck. Several reached the beach more dead than alive, and were quite unconscious when lifted from the buoy. They were dispatched at once to the station, where the most skillful attention was given in bringing them to. Towards midnight the wind canted into the westward and the weather became so cold that the men's clothing and the ropes were soon coated with ice. At half past one in the morning, Keeper E. A. Smith, with a few of the Smith's Point crew, also one or two more from the Moriches Station, arrived and rendered good

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service. At the fourth or fifth trip of the breeches-buoy — it is impossible to determine which — the fatal accident occurred which threw a gloom over all present. The two boys belonging to the vessel started in the buoy together, with strict injunctions from the captain and the mate to keep well down into the breeches, and not to attempt to get out until they reached the shore. One of them, however, Charles Golden, a native of Brooklyn, N. Y., the older of the two, before going far insisted on climbing out of the breeches, against the remonstrance of his companion, and with his feet on the buoy itself, clung to the sling close to the traveler-block. He was actuated by the desire to keep his head as high out of water as possible, without counting the danger of such an undertaking. It unhappily cost him his life, for just as they were nearing the shore a huge breaker came thundering along, and completely buried them in its foam. It was an awful moment. When the buoy emerged, Golden was gone. He had been swept away. His companion reached the beach a moment later just conscious enough to tell what had happened. Keeper Sidney Smith, Surfman Franklin Hawkins, and several others immediately scattered along the shore in search of the drowning boy, and were soon guided to him by his heart-rending cries. They rushed out waist-deep, to their own imminent peril, and Hawkins got near enough to grasp him by the arm. Smith was fol-

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lowing, within a few feet, when a heavy sea overwhelmed them, and Hawkins's mittens being stiffened with ice, the boy was torn from his grip and swept out of reach. Hawkins and Smith narrowly escaped being carried away themselves by the undertow. The poor boy must have perished immediately. His body was not recovered until three hours later, at five o'clock, about fifty yards east of the wreck, after all the rest had been saved.

This melancholy accident produced a depressing effect, but the men soon rallied and put the gear in motion again, and by four o'clock all the others were safely ashore. The final trip came near being fatal also. The gallant mate was the last to leave the wreck. The men were drawing him rapidly through the surf, when the whip fouled in some way, and the buoy came to a stand. Quick as thought Keeper Smith seized an axe and severed the lee part of the line. This released the buoy, and it soon reached the shore. The mate was hanging to it by one foot, and in another moment would have shared young Golden's fate. It seems the buoy was under water when it stopped, and he attempted to climb out, intending to try his chances by swimming, but his foot providentially caught in the breeches, and he was unable to extricate himself. He was insensible when the men rushed out to his assistance, but good care and the prompt application of restoratives brought him round on his feet again in a few hours.

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As showing the fearful ordeal these poor castaways passed through, it should be stated that, including the mate, ten of the fifteen men were so far gone when they reached the shore as to require resuscitation by the method in which the men of the service are thoroughly instructed for the restoration of apparently drowned persons. Some would doubtless have succumbed from sheer exhaustion after reaching the shore but for the prompt care given them, and it may therefore be justly claimed that these owed their lives in a twofold sense to the men who so nobly rescued them from the crumbling wreck. The needs of the castaways — some with scarcely a stitch of clothing on — made such a heavy draft upon the resources of the station, including the supply furnished by the Women's National Relief Association, that it was necessary to send to the adjacent stations for clothing and blankets to make all comfortable. They remained at the station three days, until fully recovered and able to travel, when the party left for New York. The weather continued so bitterly cold that when they set out for the mainland to take the train the bay was frozen over and a channel had to be broken through the ice all the way across.

The wreck of the bark was complete, and in a few hours the fragments were scattered on the beach for miles. This fact affords conclusive evidence of the destructive force of the surf, and

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shows that boat service would have been impracticable. The loss of life was made the subject of searching inquiry, and it was clearly demonstrated that the men of the service were entirely blameless. They did, in fact, all that lay in their power, and are entitled to unqualified praise. It is manifest that Golden's death was due to his own rashness. Had he remained in the buoy with his companion, he would have reached the shore in safety. The names of the four fishermen who so gallantly seconded the efforts of the station-men are Webster Robinson, Symes Ryder, Joshua Ryder, and Howard Terry. It is a matter of regret that the names of the crew of the steamer Oliveto, who also did so well in aiding to save the lives of their countrymen, cannot be given.

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XXII

THE BARK LENA

THE Norwegian bark Lena, bound from Natal, Brazil, to Philadelphia, with a cargo of sugar, was wrecked on the 27th of December, 1884, on the southeast bar of Hog Island (Fifth District), Va. She was commanded by Captain Mortenson, and had a crew of nine men. It appears from the statements of one of her sailors that she had been only about four weeks out from Natal, showing that she had made a splendid run, when, in some unexplained way, she got off her course and fell away to leeward, probably through the unsuspected strength of the current, until she brought up on the great field of shoals making out from Hog Island, where she went to pieces.

One of the patrolmen of the Hog Island Life-Saving Station, returning on his southern beat, saw the red and green lights of the vessel about a mile offshore. It was then a quarter of four o'clock in the morning, and he at once ran to the station, 300 yards distant, and roused the keeper. The latter, without waiting to dress, hurried up into the lookout, and by the aid of his marine glass saw that it was a square-rigged vessel heading for

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the shoals. He instantly ordered a Coston light to be burned. It appears by the statement of a survivor that the men on board saw the bright red glow of the danger signal, but paid no heed to it, ignorantly supposing it some sort of a pilot signal. A few minutes after, or at four o'clock, the keeper saw the vessel strike heavily upon the shoals. She was then a mile or more away, and directly abreast of the station.

The keeper at once ordered out the surf-boat. The night was dark and cloudy and the wind blowing moderately from the north; but the sea, which was then at quarter ebb, was extraordinary. Such a fury and confusion of surf the keeper declared he had not seen for eleven years. But this violence gave hopes that the vessel might be driven within range of the shot-line, and in fact she was already coming in, lifted and flung forward with every surge of the surf on the shoals. Convinced that these convulsive propulsions would ultimately throw her within range, the keeper and his men hastened to the station near by and soon brought down the wreck-gun and its gear. The tide was meanwhile falling fast from the beach, and the apparatus was hurriedly got ready and planted at low-water mark.

All this time it had been thick and dark, but toward seven o'clock daylight came, and showed the vessel leaping and staggering forward, like a thing maimed, in the immense area of broken foam.

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The gun was at once trained upon her and the first shot fired, but her great distance from shore was at once made evident, for the line fell short several hundred yards. The daylight continued to deepen, and by eight o'clock it began to snow. A second shot was fired at the wreck, which was still jumping and crashing shoreward with fearful violence over the shoals, but the line fell short again, and a third shot likewise.

It was now about ten o'clock. The snow had given place to rain, and though the tide was at its lowest, the sea continued appalling. The chance of reaching the vessel by boat even at the ebb was no less than desperate, but Keeper Johnson, who has had the reputation of being one of the best surfmen on the coast, and has a crew of unexcelled skill and hardihood, resolved that the effort must be made at any hazard, and the word was accordingly given to launch the surf-boat. In a moment she was in the van of the breakers, with the men tumbling in over her sides and clutching the oars, every face on fire with resolve to reach the wreck. The next instant the tussle began. In the confusion of torn waters and flying foam and spray, the boat, buried to her gunwales, would drive forward under the powerful oar strokes, and as quickly come seething backward to the beach, baffled in the effort to scale the walls of surf forever accumulating and tottering before her. For over an hour the crew toiled with

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almost breaking sinews, perpetually repulsed, and finally, quite exhausted, were carried at least half a mile down the beach by the current, with the boat nearly full of water. The sea was now on the flood and rising. Landing, the keeper, desperate to effect communication with the wreck, had a line fastened to a barrel, and launched the contrivance a mile up the beach, hoping that it might drift down toward the vessel. It failed, however, to get beyond the breakers. There were more than fifty persons, some of them surfmen and wreckers of long experience, coming and going upon the beach all day, but none of them could suggest any method for reaching the wreck, and all concurred that the sea and surf were without any precedent in their knowledge.

As night approached the keeper built a large fire upon the beach abreast of the wreck. Many of the veteran wreckers stayed all night, to keep company with the anxious and dejected crew. An hour before midnight a fog overspread the roaring waters, and the vessel was shut off from view. At four o'clock in the morning (December 28) the keeper saw vaguely, through the heavy veiling of the fog, a dark spot on the sea. The surf-boat was at once manned and put out through the darkness, in a sea of commingled breakers and wreckage. With great effort the crew succeeded in reaching the dim mass, which had struck on the outer reef, and found that it was a fragment of

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the wreck, composed of the cabin and stern. On it two men, still living, but more dead than alive, were lashed, and the lifeless body of the captain.

It was not without great difficulty, and only by watching their chance, that the crew got the boat near enough to the plunging lump of wreck stuff to take off the three men. Despite the utmost precautions, three holes were stove in the bottom of the surf-boat, and Surfman Tompson, in hauling the bodies in, was badly lamed by a sea striking the boat and causing him a sprained hip. It appears by the testimony of the men saved that the wreck went to pieces about four o'clock in the morning. The seven men lost had been in the rigging, and were all washed overboard. An eighth, as already mentioned, the captain, died on the fragment of the wreck. The other two men, who were named Andrew Essacksen and Peter Thomsen, were hardly alive when rescued, but were at once carried to the station and soon restored. They remained at the station under succor for three days, and were then taken to the nearest railroad station by the keeper, and tickets to Philadelphia procured for them, they having previously been furnished with complete outfits from the store of clothing contributed by the Women's National Relief Association. The body of the captain was decently shrouded with clothing from the same store, and buried on the island, the crew furnishing the coffin.

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The full light of day showed nothing of the vessel, nor could any trace be seen of her drowned crew. A vigilant patrol was instituted, and the next day (Monday, December 29) the body of the sailmaker, A. Charlsen, was found tossing in the surf. It was at once recovered by the life-saving crew, prepared for burial, and interred on the island. There is no record of the finding of the other bodies.

The melancholy story of this wreck may be summed up in the statement of two facts. At no time was the bark nearer than 800 yards to the shore, being, therefore, out of gun range. Secondly, the efforts of the life-saving crew, though desperately and powerfully made, could not avail to drive the surf-boat through the literally overmastering sea which prevailed on the occasion. The unhappy loss of life which the disaster involved was therefore inevitable.

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XXIII

THE SCHOONER GEORGE B. SLOAN

THE three-masted schooner George B. Sloan was wrecked at about three o'clock in the stormy morning of October 30, 1885, at the entrance of the harbor of Oswego (Ninth District), Lake Ontario. The schooner was of 313 tons burden, and was bound from Ogdensburg, N. Y., without cargo, to the port where she met with disaster. Her company consisted of her master, five men, and the cook, a woman.

The harbor of Oswego consists of an irregular formation of massive stone piers, setting out into the lake from the mouth of the Oswego River. Opposite, and at right angles to the ends of these piers, at several hundred feet distance, are two constructions of crib-work, one of them of considerable length, which is called the west breakwater, and the other parallel with this, but much shorter, which is known as the east breakwater. Between the two is a space of 350 feet, intended to constitute an entrance toward the mouth of the harbor, which the two barriers shield from the direct action of the sea. Built on a square of crib-work in the inner angle of the west breakwater, with which

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it connects by a bridge of trestlework, is an octagonal tower thirty-nine feet high, crowned with a red fixed light. In line with it on the east breakwater, a lens lantern giving a white light is suspended from a pole thirty-five feet high. Behind, on the western harbor pier, stands the Oswego lighthouse, a gray tower seventy-two feet high, surmounted by a white light, which has a range of about fifteen miles.

It was toward this group of lights that the schooner was heading. Nothing else was visible from her deck to denote the contiguity of the city and haven. The night was heavily overcast and a furious northeast gale, blowing at the rate of fifty-five miles an hour, was streaming through the gloomy immensity. Before it, under a single-reefed foresail, jib, and forestaysail, the vessel fled headlong, her rigging fairly alive with the wild whistling and screeching of the wind. She was, as sailors say, flying light, being, as already stated, without cargo or even ballast; and she virtually ran on the top of the sea, which coursed with her in black and enormous undulations. It was the captain's intention to take her into port through the open lake east of the breakwaters; but when about three miles away a heavy surge struck her and threw up her too buoyant stern, so that the rudder suddenly lost its hold on the water, and the vessel becoming for the moment beyond control whirled broadside to. After a few minutes of alarm

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and confusion she was brought upon her course once more; but the captain, fearful of her broaching to again and drifting in upon the beach if he made for the open water east of the port, resolved to endeavor to effect an entrance through the passage between the eastern and western breakwaters, and changed his direction accordingly.

The impetuous speed at which the vessel drove brought her in a few minutes abreast of the breakwaters. Nothing could be more lurid and alarming than the aspect of this scene of impending catastrophe. The immense abyss of storm-beaten gloom showed vaguely at unequal distances the spectral shapes of the lighthouse and beacon towers. From the summit of the lighthouse a pale light was doubtfully diffused, while the red beacon emitted a murky glow. Darkly revealed by this sinister half light raged the awful waters. The huge black surges, suggesting masses of shadows but for the heavy crash of their breaking, flung themselves incessantly upon the breakwaters, which they overswept with vast swaths of livid foam, and every other moment fell back in terrible recoil with almost the force of their onset. Both of the breakwaters were completely smothered up, and their shape was evident only in an obscure diagram of furious breakers. Above all and through all were the yelling of the wind and the roaring of the sea.

No pause was possible for the vessel in her

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desperate course for the passage between the breakwaters. She came right on for the entrance, staggering forward in darkness reddened by the beacon, with the lights in her rigging, and was, as the captain testified, about forty feet from it when one of the terrific seas, before mentioned as momentarily recoiling from the barriers of crib-work, pounded backward from the eastern breakwater and threw her with a crash on the corner of the western breakwater near the beacon. When it is remembered that she was over 300 tons burden, the destructive force of such an impact can be realized. The next instant another sea lifted and threw her stern with smashing force against a spur of the breakwater some thirty feet distant. Then she was hurled back broadside on against the main structure. In this way she was bowled to and fro on the monstrous huddle of waters with shocks that made the crib-work quiver, until within half an hour she was broken to pieces. At the end of that time, her captain testifies, there was not a vestige of her left.

A top stringer on the breakwater had, probably by one of the shocks of these collisions, been torn off, leaving a row of great iron bolts or spikes protruding upward. The captain, who had been standing on the topgallant forecastle with his night glasses in his hand when the vessel struck, suddenly found himself, as by some ugly magic, clinging by one of these bolts in a wallow of

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water on the crib. The sea was bursting across the construction in torrents, and he lay in the wash without the slightest recollection of how he had left the vessel. He presently saw some of the men working themselves along by the aid of the projecting bolts toward the beacon. They had mounted the bowsprit when the schooner had charged in and dropped one by one upon the breakwater. In the mean time the vessel was pounding heavily, thrashing the crib with the lower under side of her bowsprit. Presently she surged back, and then came on again with a tremendous shock which took the bowsprit out of her. Seeing this dangerously active projection gone, the captain at once worked himself along by means of the bolts through the floods of water mixed with débris from the wreck, and joined his men at the beacon. The vessel continued to break up, and her wreckage and spars were now showering madly over the breakwater.

The Oswego Life-Saving Station is situated on the inside of the harbor, some 1500 feet distant from the scene of the disaster; and the keeper, John Blackburn, standing in the neighborhood, had been watching the schooner by her plunging lights, and at length saw that she had lurched to leeward and evidently gone past the entrance. He at once called on his men to man the life-boat, and in four minutes the crew were pulling vigorously for the wreck. The uselessness

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of approaching it from the outside was at once apparent; the furious wind and sea and the convulsive thrashing of the great hull to and from the breakwater forbade even the attempt, and the life-boat was headed past the harbor piers for the sheltered inside of the crib-work. From the end of the piers to the point of destination there was a space of nearly 1000 feet, and crossing this the life-boat crew had to endure the savage raking of the storm. After a desperate pull, lasting a quarter of an hour, the inside of the western breakwater was reached. The sea was then sheeting over it in roaring cataracts; and as the life-boat crew pulled along under its lee a terrific mass of black water suddenly uprose, bearing on its summit a tumbled group of spars and a huge section of the vessel's deck, which it threw across and over the breakwater within twenty feet of the rowers. Had it fairly reached them every man would have been crushed and drowned.

A few minutes later they shot up alongside the square of crib-work, in the angle of the breakwater on which stood the beacon, and found the captain, mate, and the four sailors of the vessel standing there together under the lee of the tower. The first question developed the fact that the woman cook had been lost. A hasty glance on the part of the keeper showed him that the schooner had been completely demolished. Nothing of her was left but the fragments which

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flew in the dark water over the low barrier of the breakwater. No time was lost, therefore, in taking the six survivors into the life-boat and struggling back through the gale to the shore, where they were landed by half past three. After putting the men on their way to a hotel, the life crew returned to the scene of disaster and searched the copious wreckage that still came over the breakwater, but found no trace of the body of the drowned woman.

It appears by the testimony of the mate that when the vessel first struck he had found the woman standing in the cabin with a packed satchel in her hand. He shouted frantically to her for God's sake to come up on deck and save herself. She went back into the stateroom and got another satchel. He again shouted to her to drop them and save herself. It was the last time she was seen alive. It is probable that she never got out of the cabin, but was drowned when the vessel sank, nor ever liberated until the hull finally went to pieces. Her name was Eliza Tackaberry.

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XXIV

THE BARK KRALJEVICA

A PECULIARLY tragic wreck, and one that deeply thrilled the dwellers on the Atlantic seaboard, was that of the Austrian bark Kraljevica, which occurred on the morning of February 11, 1886, not far from the Barnegat Life-Saving Station (Fourth District), coast of New Jersey. The bark was a vessel of 719 tons, bound from Marseilles to New York with a cargo of salt in bulk, and she had a crew of fourteen men, the captain included. At the time of her disaster she was running with all sail set before a strong northeast wind. The thick darkness was greatly increased by a dense fog. An anxious watch was kept on deck for Barnegat light, but though its splendid brilliance should have made it visible, the impenetrable murk prevented the least sign of it from being apparent. The vessel continued to drive ahead under her ghostly cloud of canvas when suddenly — it was then half past one o'clock — there was a frightful rebound, a great crash of breaking wood, and the vessel stood staggering with the water flying all over her. She had struck on the south side of Barnegat Shoals.

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The confusion of harsh noises was instant and great, — the swashing blows of the sea, the violent slatting of the sails, the straining and creaking of the spars, the groaning and grinding of the hull in the gripe of the shoal. But, above all, the men on board heard the turbulent irruption of the water below decks, dreadfully signifying that the bottom was rent and that destruction was entering. There was nothing to be done but to make preparations for leaving the ship. The long-boat was got ready. The captain took nothing but his instruments, but at the last moment went down into the cabin to get some money he had left there. The influx of the water had now so increased that just as he was entering the flood burst up the cabin floor, and he made haste to retreat without getting the money. It was evident that the vessel was breaking up, and the long-boat was at once launched and rowed off with the fourteen men on board. It was half past two o'clock when they thus put off from the great slouching bulk lying there aslant in the fog and darkness, with the cataracts sheeting over her.

At that time the sea was moderate and the men made no attempt to land, but drifted for hours over the dark water, the wind and current, however, carrying them along the coast and towards the shore. It was not until the foggy daylight made the beach dimly visible that the head of the boat was turned in that direction. All went well

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until they entered the commotion of waters on the bar. This was the second shock of catastrophe. The boat was suddenly twirled over and over, half a dozen times in succession, and all hands were engaged in a frantic struggle for life. Eight of them struck out to swim to the shore and were speedily drowned. The captain and five of the sailors clung to the capsized boat, and after a long and desperate struggle to maintain their difficult hold managed to gain the beach, almost dead with exhaustion, about half past eight o'clock.

The point of landing was about a mile below the Ship Bottom Station and nine miles from the wreck. In the heavy swathing of the fog the station was not visible, but presently the forlorn group of shipwrecked sailors descried the chimney and gable end of a gunner's hut about 200 yards behind the beach hills. They approached, and finding the place locked, forced an entrance. To their great joy they found the hut well supplied with fuel and water, potatoes, corned beef, matches, and tobacco. A fire was lighted, the food cooked and eaten, their clothes hung up to dry, and taking advantage of the bedding the place contained, the worn and beaten castaways were soon lost in a deep sleep.

It was in the intervals of the passage of the beach patrols that the approaching boat-load of men capsized, and there had been none to witness their agonized struggle for life in the dark com-

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motion of the surf and undertow. The sea had speedily effaced the great trample of footprints the survivors had left upon its margin in escaping, and the rising tide soon equally expunged their tracks across the beach on their way to their place of shelter. No trace was left of anything that had happened. The men saved lay behind the closed door of the hut in the dull sleep of exhaustion; the bodies of their comrades, hardly more inanimate, tossed aimlessly beneath the waves.

While this sad drama was in progress another was being enacted in the immediate vicinity of the wreck, in which three of the surfmen of the Barnegat Station added their names to the steadily increasing roll of brave men and true, belonging to the service, who have offered up their lives a sacrifice to the cause of humanity. It should have been said that the crew of the Kraljevica, before leaving their vessel, had burned for a brief space what is called a flash-light, with the faint hope that it might attract the attention of some one on the shore. As the vessel was a half mile off and the weather was thick, it was impossible to see her in the foggy darkness, although the patrols of the Barnegat Station had reported flashes of light in the offing, dimly discernible, which they supposed was a vessel's signal or perhaps distant lightning. The flashes appeared such a long way off, however, that it was impossible to arrive at any definite conclusion regarding them. The matter, neverthe-

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less, made such an impression that it became the sole topic of conversation at the breakfast table which the men sat down to at half past five, and the result was that as soon as the meal was finished Keeper Ridgway and his trusty assistant the No. 1 surfman, John I. Soper, went out on the beach, before it was yet light, and remained there on the lookout seaward until the day dawned. Then, sure enough, they caught a glimpse through the fog of a square-rigged vessel, a bark evidently, on the southerly edge of the shoals. This was the Kraljevica. She bore a little south of east from the station. The men hurried back to give alarm and order out the boat.

While the crew were getting ready and before leaving the station, Ridgway telephoned the news to Keeper Grimm of the next station south (Loveladies Island), and requested him to come up with his men, adding that no apparatus would be needed, as he proposed using his boat, a new one of approved model recently received from Greenport, Long Island. The tide being low and the time, therefore, the best that could be chosen for going off, Ridgway and his men, without waiting for the Loveladies Island crew to arrive, ran the boat down into the surf and put off. This was at twenty minutes to six. Keeper Joel H. Ridgway took the steering oar, and the following surfmen were at the oars: John I. Soper, Solomon Soper, William C. Inman, Samuel F. Perrine, Cornelius D. Thomp-

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son, and Henry Reeves, all tried and experienced men. There was a high sea tumbling in from the northeast, and with it came a strong set or current along the shore, the latter an invariable accompaniment of a northeast wind on that coast. The boat got off with but little difficulty, the place where the men launched being somewhat sheltered by the shoals which trend off southeast from the inlet. When, however, the first line of breakers was reached, the men encountered a sea much higher and vastly more dangerous than anything they had anticipated. The survivors say it was the ugliest surf they had met for years, the boat at times, as it mounted the huge ridges of water, rising to an almost perpendicular position and threatening to topple over backwards. In fact, Ridgway himself, as he guided the boat, had several narrow escapes from being tossed over the stern by his steering oar when the boat would be forced violently backward by the seas. Under such conditions, with the sea steadily increasing, the progress of the boat was very slow. The men succeeded, however, in spite of many obstacles, in pulling to within fifty yards of the wreck, when it became evident that she was abandoned, one of her boats being gone and not a soul to be seen on deck. The bark had settled deeply in the sand, the sea was breaking completely over her, and she already showed signs of breaking up. Ridgway would fain have kept on to the vessel, where he

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could have made fast and given his crew a breathing spell, preparatory to the ordeal of again battling with the surf on the return trip, but the men were so exhausted by their arduous work at the oars that this was found impossible; the boat could not be forced against the sea any farther. Under these circumstances he decided to back in towards the beach. This operation required much skill and caution, but it was his only course, other than running in before the sea, which would be vastly more dangerous. It proved, however, such slow work on account of their having so frequently to pull ahead to meet the heaviest of the seas, that Ridgway finally determined, after consulting the stroke oarsman, John I. Soper, to turn the boat's head shoreward and run direct for the beach.

It should be stated that the boat had been half swamped repeatedly, and this, besides making it heavy and unwieldy, had in a measure crippled the crew, as it was necessary for one man to lay in his oar and keep the bailing bucket in operation dipping the water out. The keeper watched his opportunity, and at the proper moment quickly slued the boat around, and then giving the word to his men to pull together he sped his craft shoreward, so that before the next run of heavy breakers reached him he had gained a distance of about 150 yards. The boat was then held in check until that danger had passed, when a second dash was made which lessened the distance another 100

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yards. This was very well, but they were approaching the worst place of all, where the breakers were continuous and there was no chance to dodge them. The only course was to hold the boat against the heaviest combers and let them rush by in their mad race for the shore. And now came the fatal moment; the boat was halfway in from the wreck and the brave little band were doing their best in the wild turmoil of waters when, to their utter dismay, and to the horror of their comrades who were watching them from the shore, a towering wave reared its frowning crest close astern and so hollow that the boat could not rise to it. An instant later there came a thundering roar as tons upon tons of water broke with savage impetuosity upon the boat, twirled it round broadside to, and rolled it over and over like a chip, the men being thrown out in all directions. A struggle for life followed; one of the men, Samuel F. Perrine, must have been stunned or killed instantly, as his limp and lifeless body drifted off with the current, not the slightest effort on his part being noticed by the rest. His body was recovered an hour later, by the Loveladies Island crew, a mile or more to the southward, with an ugly bruise across the face, which told plainly that he had been thrown in violent contact probably with the gunwale of the boat or the blade of an oar. The rest attempted to regain the boat, but soon abandoned the idea upon seeing that it kept turning over and over in the

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surf, and instead struck out for the shore, although the survivors freely stated afterward that they had very little hope of getting there. It was a terrible ordeal from first to last, the men declaring that although buoyed up by their cork life-preservers the waves tumbled in in such wild confusion over their heads as to keep them submerged half the time and give them scarcely a chance to breathe.

Keeper Ridgway and Surfman Thompson were the first to reach the beach, after struggling bravely for twenty-five or thirty minutes. In that time they were swept by the current fully a mile from where the boat upset. They were at one time quite close in, but the strong undertow cut them out again. When next, however, they succeeded, after much exhausting effort, in nearing the beach, the men of the other station rushed out waist-deep and brought them safely to terra firma. These two, with a little assistance, were able to walk to the station. Surfman Reeves was rescued some distance farther south, and Surfman Inman got ashore still farther away. Reeves, although much exhausted, was soon revived, but Inman was so far gone he had to be carried to the station, where restoratives were applied for over two hours before he came to. The rest were dead when taken from the water. John Soper, an excellent swimmer, did bravely until he was within fifty yards of the beach, when he was swept far out again by

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an eddy of the current, and he shortly thereafter succumbed from exhaustion, the men on shore who were watching him seeing his head sink forward upon his breast, and from that moment he made no further effort. The poor fellow was quite dead when dragged from the surf. Solomon Soper, a much older man than the rest, lost consciousness and died very soon after the boat capsized, doubtless also from exhaustion after such fatiguing labor at the oar. The surf-boat, than which there is probably none better on the coast, drifted ashore a mile and a half from the place of the accident. Three of the bottom planks were split, and it was also damaged otherwise. It may be said that notwithstanding their terrible experience the confidence of the surviving life-savers in their boat was not diminished in the least. They all agree that no ordinary surf-boat could have withstood such an overwhelming sea, no matter what the model. It has been stated that the bark exhibited signs of breaking up at daybreak when the life-saving crew approached her. Some idea of the destructive force of the sea may be had from the fact that by three o'clock in the afternoon, or less than fourteen hours after she struck, not a vestige of her was to be seen on the shoals. She had gone entirely to pieces, and the fragments were scattered along the beach for miles.

A singular circumstance connected with this wreck is the fact that the presence of the surviv-

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ing Austrians was not known to a soul until the following day, it being supposed in the mean time that every man had perished, one body, that of a seaman, being found midway between the Ship Bottom and Long Beach stations. It should here be stated that the chain of crews between Barnegat and Little Egg Harbor Inlets were thoroughly on the alert, the news of the calamity having been telephoned down the line early in the day and the men requested to search for the bodies. The six Austrians who reached the shore did not emerge from the hut in which they had sought refuge until the morning of the 12th, when, after many hours of refreshing sleep, they bethought it time to look about them with the view of finding an avenue of escape to the mainland. Upon retracing their path of the day previous to the surf shore, the tide being out, they saw the footprints of the patrol, and following these soon overtook Surfman Oliver P. Inman of the Ship Bottom Station, who conducted them to his station, where they were comfortably provided for and given such clothing as they needed from the supply humanely placed at the keeper's disposal by the Women's National Relief Association. The five sailors were sheltered until the 14th, when passage was given them across the bay en route to New York, the captain remaining a few days longer to dispose of what was saved of the wreck. But three of the bodies of their lost comrades were recovered,

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the one already mentioned and two others. One of these, the body of the carpenter, was washed ashore near the Little Egg Station, eight miles from where the boat had upset in the surf and seventeen or eighteen from the wreck. It thus appears that the total number of lives lost was eleven, — eight of the Kraljevica's crew and three of the station-men. It was the most disastrous wreck of the year. The three lost surfmen had served for many years at the Barnegat Station. They were noted alike for their bravery and faithfulness to duty, and the Service by their death suffers an irreparable loss. They each left a widow, and one of them, John I. Soper, left two children, a third child being born after his death. Under the provisions of the act of May 4, 1882, the department is enabled to carry the names of these widows and children on the pay-rolls of the Service for a period of two years, the amount paid to each family being equal to what the deceased husband and father would have received in life. The funeral, which took place a few days after the wreck, was the occasion of one of the most touching and impressive demonstrations ever known in that vicinity. People flocked to the scene from all the adjacent villages, and the little Methodist Episcopal Church in Barnegat village was crowded to overflowing with sympathizing neighbors and friends assembled to pay a last tribute of respect and esteem to the gallant dead.

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XXV

A RACE FOR LIFE

NOVEMBER 18, 1887, will long remain memorable in the annals of the life-saving service as the day on which the crew of the Ship Canal Station, Michigan, sped to Marquette, a distance of 110 miles, and rendered extraordinary and gallant service in saving the crews of two vessels.

Early in the morning of November 17 one of the worst northeasters that ever swept over Lake Superior set in with a bewildering storm of snow and sleet, mounting to a gale, which scourged the waters into appalling turbulence. This tempest continued for over three days, and the damage it wrought to shipping was prodigious. Within the forty-eight hours following its beginning, over thirty wrecks were reported, involving the loss of more than half a million of dollars and nearly forty lives. The sea was so violent that its effect reached the harbors, creating a surge and undertow that in many instances made the vessels at the docks snap their heavy moorings like packthread, and seek safety in riding at anchor in the open stream. At Marquette, early in the day, the seas rolled sheer over the breakwater, setting

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the harbor water in wild commotion, and disquieting or endangering all the craft upon it. By two o'clock in the afternoon the waves were sheeting freely over the barrier, and a little later they tore the wooden tower of the breakwater light from its massive timber fastenings and sent it adrift headlong. A great throng of people who had gathered on the piers and witnessed this stroke of devastation presently had their hearts brought into their mouths by the sight of a schooner, the Eliza Gerlach, scooting madly, with all her canvas closely reefed, toward the breakwater. The tug Gillette at once boldly started for her, and fortunately got her in tow in time to avert the impending collision. Immediately after, the same tug found in the thick snowstorm another vessel, the schooner Florida, about to become a total wreck by smashing against the docks, and in saving the seven men on board by getting them to jump from one vessel to the other, which was all that could be done, the mate was caught between the two hulls as the sea flung them together and crushed to death. These are examples of the casualties which were constantly impending or occurring throughout the region.

The next day (November 18) the tempest continued with gloomy violence. The gale blew from the northeast with unabated fury, and as far as the eye could pierce under the heavy veiling of the snow the sea showed as a tumultuous waste of

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breakers. Everything in the neighborhood of the harbor bore the marks of ravage. The breakwater, which had lost its lighthouse tower the day before, was now stripped of all its planking, and lay bare and drenched with a wall of water incessantly sweeping across it under a storm of spray forty feet high. A large dock, known as the rolling-mill dock, had been submerged during the night, and a mountain of lumber, shingles, lathing, etc., which had been piled upon it waiting for shipment, had been swept away. The dismal light of breaking day revealed this scene of dreary confusion and havoc to a few spectators grouped upon the harbor piers.

Before long the attention of these men was concentrated upon a quarter six miles to the eastward, where two spectral shapes were momentarily appearing and vanishing through the snowfall. It was conjectured that these phantoms denoted two vessels ashore, and excitement at once began to kindle. Gradually a concourse of people from the town filled up the vacant spaces on the piers, and by eleven o'clock in the forenoon a large crew of men got a yawl-boat upon a wagon and started on an expedition of discovery. It was as they had surmised. They found on their arrival two vessels ashore off the mouth of Chocolay River — one a large steam-barge, the Robert Wallace, the other her consort, a barge or four-masted schooner, the David Wallace. They both belonged to Lorain,

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Ohio, and were bound from Duluth, Minn., to Buffalo, N. Y., laden with wheat in bulk. The Robert Wallace had a crew of fifteen men; her consort, the David Wallace, had nine. They had sailed in company and were both driven in, lost in the thick atmosphere, until they brought up aground about 400 yards from shore near the entrance to Chocolay River. The stranding appears to have taken place about an hour after midnight on November 18. It was immediately followed by the shocks of immense seas which broke successively over the vessels, smashing in the after cabin and pouring down the companion-ways into the engine-room of the steam-barge, from whence rose huge clouds of steam as the water met the boiler. To intensify the horror and confusion of the moment, the companion schooner ran up on the barge, fortunately without crashing into her, but quite as fortunately got free the next minute by a breaker lifting her bows, and swung off toward the shore, when her tow-line was cut to prevent her dragging the barge into the trough of the sea. Meanwhile the crew of the barge made a rush through the invading water for the forecastle, and took refuge in the captain's cabin, while the sea continued its demolition aft. The surges swept the deck from stem to stern; the after cabin was beaten to pieces, and towards morning the hull so sagged with its own weight that it was practically broken in two. All the time the men on board

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were in constant expectation of the vessel going to pieces, and it was not until they realized how strongly the forward part held together that they began to hope for ultimate safety. As long as they had steam the whistles were kept sounding, but so deafening was the noise of the gale that they could not be heard even on board the neighboring schooner.

The crowd of men with the yawl arrived from the town, as already intimated, after daybreak, and saw the two vessels lying stern on to the beach, with the breakers streaming and flying over them. The steam-barge had the appearance of a complete ruin, her deck being nearly level with the water, which swept over her from end to end. Her men could be seen by glimpses, peeping from the wheel-house and captain's cabin. The schooner looked in better plight, lying well imbedded in the sand nearer the beach, with less water pouring over her, and only broken up a little forward.

The suffering and peril of the sailors had gone home to every heart, and the generous citizens now engaged in a protracted series of almost frantic efforts to reach them. Five men manned the yawl and put out through the terrible surf with a rope in tow, held by their comrades on shore, but almost immediately the wind and surge whirled them back to the beach. Undaunted, they bailed out the boat and with redoubled fury launched again. This time they actually passed half the dis-

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tance to the schooner over the awful furrows, when a huge sea leaped upon them and filled the boat almost to swamping. Their only course was to signal their mates on shore to haul them back to the beach. This was done, and it was concluded that with a boat so small rescue was impossible.

A tug next attempted to steam over to the wrecks, but failed, not being able to get near enough for effective service.

The throng on the beach continued to increase, and by one o'clock in the day had become large. The people came driving down from the city in a stream of vehicles, all alive with sympathy and intense anxiety for the fate of the imperiled men. It was presently determined to dispatch a team to the powder-mill near the city for an old mortar which was stored there, the intention being to fire a line over the vessel. Meanwhile another attempt was made to reach the wrecks with a skiff, but before her crew had got midway a swift and powerful current bore them out of their course and they had to return to shore. From time to time the wan sailors on the wrecks, who could be seen through the whirling snow anxiously watching the efforts made in their behalf, themselves contributed their efforts for relief by sending out lines attached to water butts; but the furious undertow invariably swept them off as they neared the shore.

Darkness was approaching, and the only hope

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now was to effect line communication with the vessel. The coming of the mortar was awaited with impatience and anxiety. The old gun had been spiked, and the delay in its arrival was owing to the necessity of taking it to some relatively distant iron-shops to have it drilled. Pending its coming, the throng on the beach busied themselves with coiling down lines for the endeavor to reach the wrecks, and in lighting a number of huge bonfires for the encouragement of the men on board. These fires, it afterward appeared, were a great comfort to the sailors, who took them as a token that they were not abandoned, but that efforts for their deliverance would continue to be made. They were cheered, too, by the presence of the concourse, which the flare of the flames revealed through the ghastly whirl of snow against the background of the darkness. During the whole night it seemed to them that the beach was lined by a restless multitude, all intent upon them.

It was fully six o'clock in the evening before the wagon came with the mortar. The old piece of ordnance was received with tumultuous cheering, and at once put in position for action. The line was attached by eager hands to a twenty-four-pound shot and the gun fired, but with a charge so light that it did not carry more than fifty feet. The line was hauled back, and the mortar once more loaded. This time it went off with a stunning report, flew asunder, and was scattered over

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the beach in a hundred pieces. It is wonderful that no one was hurt, but so it happened. The weary hours of waiting had a futile but not a tragic ending. The boom of the explosion, heard on board the wrecks, muffled by the uproar of the wind and sea, was not understood, being hailed as a token that exertion still continued, and giving heart and hope to the shipwrecked.

The multitude on the beach were now cast down with the conviction that nothing could be done. It was terrible to realize that a large group of men were doomed to perish within a short distance from them without the possibility of assistance. In the midst of the general solicitude and despair, however, it had occurred several hours before to some person (Captain John Frink of the tug Gillette is named as the one) that a last resort lay in invoking the aid of the crew of the distant life-saving station at Ship Canal. It was clear that everything now depended upon procuring a life-boat and the help of a disciplined corps of life-savers. Unknown as yet to the throng on the Marquette beach, though probably not to the people in the town, who were quite as thoroughly roused to the peril of the two crews, the managers of the railroad had nobly arranged for a special train to bring the life-saving men to the scene, fully equipped for rescue. A telegram had been sent to Captain Albert Ocha, the keeper of the Ship Canal Station, telling him of the danger to

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the crews. The message was brought across the lake and up the canal to him from Houghton, six miles distant, by the tug James W. Croze, and reached him at four o'clock in the afternoon. He and his men at once sprang to the fullest activity, and with the aid of the tug's crew got the life-boat on board, together with the Lyle gun and the necessary equipments for action. The tug then steamed away with them to Houghton, where a train, consisting of a strong engine, a passenger coach, and two flat cars, was fuming on the track, waiting for them. To pile the life-boat and the apparatus upon these cars was the work of but a few minutes, volunteers pouring in on every side to help men whose errand was to save life. Then the crew bundled into the car provided for them, and at a quarter of eight o'clock the train, amidst the cheers of the beholders, clanked out at a pace which rapidly increased to pell-mell speed, though over a track heavy with snow.

The noblest descriptive powers would find a fitting subject in the epic journey of the life-savers. It need not, however, be here dwelt upon. The mind catches in advance its salient features, — the incessant headlong rush of the powerful locomotive into the night and gale; the muffled roar and rattle over the buried tramway; the huge rolls of smoke volleying from the funnel, and torn and tossed by the wind; the lights of the train racing with it in its speed; around and above it

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the enormous concave of obscurity made livid by the vast whirlwind of sleet and snow; and within their dimly lighted car, lifting all into strange significance and dignity, the lolling figures of the crew, uncouth and negligent, with the sense of the perilous adventure to which they were speeding plain upon their stern and composed faces. The cars which bore them flew with an almost eerie velocity. Despite the load of snow upon the rails, nearly the highest speed was maintained, and for the greater part of the way the time was but a few seconds more than a mile a minute. The whole distance of 110 miles was traveled, including necessary stoppages, within four hours. It was about half past eleven when the surging and cheering crowd gathered at the Marquette railroad station saw something white, shapeless, deformed, monstrous, and enormous come snorting and clanging into the depot. It was the delivering train, nearly buried in accumulated snow. The car behind the engine was especially loaded, and looked like some grotesque behemoth brought in captive out of the winter landscape. From it in a moment poured the crew in their storm-clothes, eager for their ordeal.

They had paused on their way at Michigamme to telegraph to Captain Frink to have teams ready to take the apparatus from the train to the lake, and also to procure a good store of lanterns. This he had done, and also gone around among

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the merchants and collected generous contributions of bread, meat, coffee, butter, cheese, etc., for the half-starved men upon the wrecks when they should be brought ashore. The start was made without delay, and after a rough trip, part of the way by train and part by wagons and sleighs along the dark lake shore, in the edge of the water, and over a sort of corduroy of floundering driftwood, which made it slow and hard traveling, they finally arrived abreast of the two vessels at one o'clock in the morning (November 19). Here they found a multitude of people, and the wild place lighted by bonfires. The darkness outside of the tossing light of the flames was intense, and the gale furious, but the snow had ceased. In some way, not clearly understood, the rudder of the life-boat had been injured in getting it from the carriage, and it was judged best, in view of the awful surge of the sea, to attempt the rescue by the lines. The Lyle gun was accordingly placed, and a line fired across the steam-barge amidships; but it appears that the men on board could not venture aft from the shelter of the wheel-house to look for the line on the wave-swept deck, so the keeper concluded to resort to the life-boat. It was two o'clock when the launch was made. There were two reefs to cross, and the surf was terrible. By the time the first reef was surmounted the boat had shipped three seas, the irons of the rudder had bent and the timber split,

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and return to the shore for repairs was unavoidable. Pending the attempt to get the rudder into order, another shot was fired over the vessel, but the sailors did not appear to get the line, and by the time the day began to break the life-boat was again launched. This time the pull was long, hard, and desperate. Several seas were shipped, but the foaming reefs were crossed and the boat came alongside. She was a weird spectacle. The seas had frozen on her, so that she seemed a shell of ice, with which she was so loaded down that of the fifteen men on board the steam-barge it was judged prudent to take in only nine, with which number the ice-enveloped life-boat crew contrived, after much stern labor and peril, to safely regain the shore. They instantly relaunched, and after another battle with the tumbling freshets of the lake, and the shipment of a succession of seas, each of which filled the buoyant boat to the gunnels, they brought in the other six men from the barge. They then put out once more to the succor of the nine men on board the other vessel, the David Wallace. She lay astern of the barge, about 200 feet distant. It was then about seven o'clock in the morning. The wind had somewhat lessened, but the breakers were tremendous. Again and again the boat was flooded, and driven astern; on the second reef she was nearly thrown end over end; the rudder split so much and got so weak that she had to be managed almost solely

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by the oars, involving double skill and labor; and her valiant crew were incessantly drenched with the icy water, which froze upon their clothing as fast as it struck, and thickened the bitter mail in which they were sheathed. Their efforts continued indomitable, and by eight o'clock they surged alongside the schooner in their boat of ice, and returned to the beach with the nine men on board.

As fast as each boat-load was landed the sailors were taken to the great fires which the citizens had built, and there given hot coffee and food. The men from the schooner were not so badly off, but the fifteen men from the steam-barge were numb with cold, and nearly starved, having had hardly anything to eat for two days. It was a noble providence to have had an ample supply of provisions and hot drink ready for service to them immediately upon landing, close to the comforting fires.

The life-saving crew reached their station the next day (November 20) an hour after noon, leaving behind them at Marquette a glowing remembrance of their powers and achievement. To have come rushing behind their wild locomotive through the night and tempest over so many snowy leagues to the rescue of a group of despairing sailors, and then, with hearts greater than danger, to have gone out again and again through the dreadful thickets of the breakers and brought every man ashore, was a feat so boldly adventurous, so

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grandly picturesque, that the current accounts of it in the public journals roused at the time the whole lake region to intense enthusiasm, and sent thrills of sympathy and admiration through the country.

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